

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

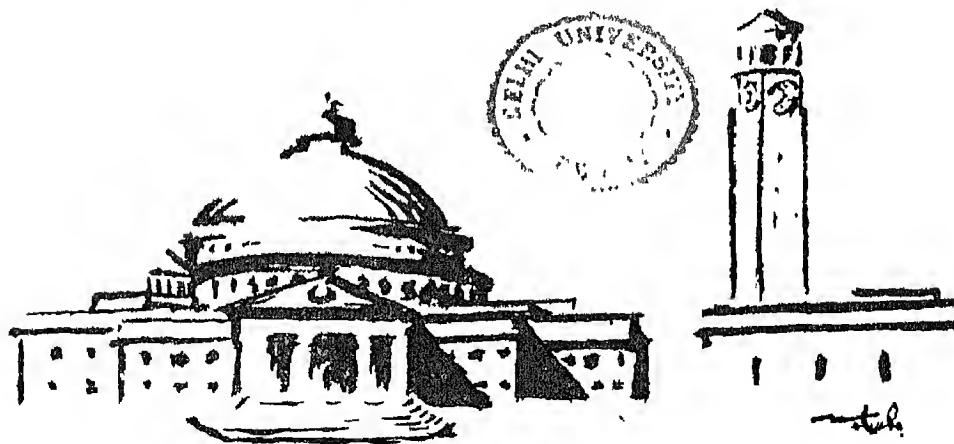
Cl. No. V61151N2 14/12/

Ac. No. 40147 Date of release for loan

This book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below. An overdue charge of 5 Paise will be collected for each day the book is kept overtime.

CULTURAL SURVEY OF
MODERN
EGYPT

M. M. MOSHARRAFA



PART TWO

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
LONDON · NEW YORK · TORONTO

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. LTD
6 & 7 CLIFFORD STREET, LONDON, W.1
NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY 1
17 CHITTARANJAN AVENUE, CALCUTTA 13
36A MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS 2
LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. INC
55 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 3
LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
215 VICTORIA STREET, TORONTO 1

8014-1
V671:5.74
H17.7.

*All rights, including Translation into Arabic,
are Reserved.*

*The opinions expressed in this book are not necessarily
those of the Egyptian Ministry of Education.*

First Published 1948

*Printed in GREAT BRITAIN by
The Walthamstow Press, Ltd (T.U.), Guardian House, Forest Road, E 17*

CONTENTS

PREFACE <i>by Professor J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.</i>	v
AUTHOR'S NOTE	<i>page</i> 1
HISTORY:	
THE PHARAONIC PERIOD	3
THE PERSIAN PERIOD	13
THE GREEK PERIOD	14
THE ROMAN PERIOD	19
CHRISTIANITY	21
THE PROPHET MOHAMMED	28
ISLAM	31
MODERN EGYPT	50
MODERN CULTURE:	
LANGUAGE	56
LITERATURE	58
MUSIC	59
THE CINEMA	59
RADIO	60
THE THEATRE	61
ARCHITECTURE	63
FURNITURE	63
PAINTING	64
SCULPTURE	64
DANCING	65
CALLIGRAPHY	65
THE PRESS	66
HANDICRAFTS	66
GAMES AND SPORT	67
SOCIAL HABITS	68
CONCLUSION	70
TABLES:	
VITAL STATISTICS	<i>page 2 of cover</i>
AREA OF SETTLED LAND SURFACE AND POPULATION	<i>page 2 of cover</i>
DISTRIBUTION OF LAND	<i>page 72</i>
MAIN ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE, 1913-38	<i>page 3 of cover</i>

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Tomb of Mena	
Alabaster Perfume Vase	
Avenue of Sphinxes, Karnak	<i>between*pages 16 and 17</i>
Papyrus Pillars of Amenhotep III	
Tomb of Seti I	
Another Section of the Tomb of Seti I	
The Zodiac, Temple of Hathor	
Deir es-Surian	
Deir el-Baramous	<i>between pages 32 and 33</i>
Deir el-Markarious	
Court of the Mosque of Amr 'Ibn El 'As	
Kufic Inscription, Mosque of El-Hakim	
Minaret of the Mosque of Ibn-Tulun	
Irrigation: Aswan Dam	
The Nile Barrage	
A Typical Irrigation Canal	<i>between pages 48 and 49</i>
Levelling a Cotton Field	
The Cotton Plant	
A Cotton Plantation	
Students at an Art School	
Tapestry Making	
A Metal Worker	
Playing the Mizmar	
A Provincial Family	<i>between pages 64 and 65</i>
Fishing, Lake Manzala	
The Mouth of the Nile at Rosetta	
The Nile in Flood	

PREFACE .

In asking me to write a preface to the second volume of his cultural survey of Egypt, Mr. Mosharrafa has conferred an undeserved honour upon me. I hope that his book will have a very wide sale in Britain for three reasons. The first is, of course, that since 1882 Britain and Egypt have had a special relationship which has, I think, been unfortunate for both. Until all traces of that relationship are at an end, it is the duty of British people to listen to what Egyptians have to say about it, even if it is unpleasant.

The second reason is this. One cannot understand British, or indeed any other European, civilization, without understanding that of ancient Egypt, however superficially. Let me take just two examples, besides the many which will occur to any reader of this book. I am writing this Preface on paper. Our word paper is derived from the Greek word papyros, which is the rendering of an ancient Egyptian phrase meaning "the thing of Pharaoh," in other words, the state monopoly. We have a number of domestic animals. Most of these were already domesticated in Egypt at the time of the Pyramid-builders. The horse is, of course, a conspicuous exception on this list. But paintings of these early dynasties show a great many species domesticated, or at least captive, which have since that date ceased to be members of human society. These lost domestic animals include several species of deer and the Hunting Dog, *Lycaon pictus*. Is it perhaps due to some more or less accidental feature of Egyptian history between the pyramid age and the Hyksos that we have tame cats but not tame gazelles?

Thirdly, I think that Mr. Mosharrafa's treatment of his subject is sufficiently original and thought-provoking to make it worth reading had it been written about Siam, Peru or some other country which has never had any particular influence on British civilization nor been conquered by

British armies. The author points out that the culture of his country has differed greatly according to which class was in the ascendant. I suppose that some readers will regard this as leftist ideology. It seems to me common sense. If an Egyptian is learning about the culture of Europe, one of his very first lessons will concern the great change which took place in the 16th and 17th centuries, and gave us new styles of literature, architecture, music and painting, in catholic as well as protestant countries. This was associated with the fall of the feudal nobility and the rise of the commercial class. Mr. Mosharrafa tells us that similar changes occurred in his own country, with similar effects on its culture. Until we have grasped this fact we shall try to fit the cultures of Egypt in different ages under one formula, and fail completely.

I am particularly interested in the scattered remarks on European culture, and particularly on Christianity. I must confess that Mr. Mosharrafa has not convinced me regarding the origin of the doctrine of the Trinity of God. He has certainly convinced me that he knows more about Christianity than Dean Inge knows about Islam, and that he has a right to be heard. And it is extremely important that Christians should listen to the voices of men brought up in the traditions of the other great religions, particularly when they are describing the religious developments of their own countries.

I very much hope that the time will soon come again when British people will be able once more to visit Egypt for pleasure, though if the luxuries which Mr. Mosharrafa describes are gone for ever there will be no great cause for regret. We shall have in future to treat the Egyptians as equals, as we treat the French or Swedes, and if so we had better know what some of them think about themselves.

When we think about Egypt at all, we are much too apt to think either about modern Egypt or about the very ancient Egypt before the Roman Conquest. We forget the Egypt of the early Middle Ages, which was making quite as great contributions to culture as contemporary Europe. It is a striking fact that algebra is largely Egyptian in origin. Where a large variety of written symbols was in use, as in Pharaonic

Egypt, it was natural to use one of them to denote an unknown quantity, and this was done. Diophantus of Alexandria, who first used letters for this purpose, may well have been influenced by the pre-Hellenistic practice. And it is at least remarkable that al-Khawarizmi, who may be regarded as the founder of modern algebra, was an Egyptian by domicile, though, of course, not by origin. We are equally apt to forget the great Jewish philosopher Maimonides, who lived most of his life in Cairo and wrote in Arabic. His philosophy was not very different from that of the great Islamic philosophers, but because he cited the Old Testament rather than the Koran, it was far more acceptable in Christian Europe. His main work was indeed translated into Latin soon after his death, in time to influence St. Thomas Aquinas.

Modern Egyptians are making great efforts to develop science and mathematics, and seem to find European ways of thought easier than do most non-Europeans. The reason is simple enough. European ways of thought owe a great deal to Egypt.

Hence Egyptians should become the principal interpreters to Europe of Islamic culture. This is a function of the very greatest importance. One need not be a Christian to admit that Christianity encouraged human progress along certain moral and intellectual paths. One need not be a Muslim to admit that Islam encouraged progress along other paths. Two are notable. The brotherhood of Islam in practice transcends racial barriers far more completely than does that of Christianity. And the ban on visual arts other than decoration, together with the mercantile interest in commodities, led to an intensive investigation of qualities of things which do not depend on their shape, that is to say, of chemistry.

A full humanism can no more reject the positive contributions of Islam to progress than it can reject those of Christianity. I am sure that one of the functions of Mr. Mosharraf'a's book will be to help Europeans to understand these contributions.

University College,
London.
November, 1947.

J. B. S. HALDANE.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank Marjorie Jacobs and Ossama el-Kholy for the generous help they have given in preparing the text, Abdel-Razik Hassan for supplying statistics relating to the main items of expenditure and A. F. Kersting for most of the photographs

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Part II of the Survey deals mainly with the historic background of Egypt. The author has thought it fit to present an outline of Egyptian history on one canvas, as it were, in order to enable the reader to receive a comprehensive picture of its continuous development. The approach in itself is not new, but to the author's knowledge it is the first time that the history of the Middle East has been viewed as class formation. Like most new things, history viewed this way lacks the support of traditional scholarship. Its newness, however, is the justification for writing it.

The re-evaluation of European and Asiatic history from the point of view of class formation is far from being complete. Apart from the violent but hidden opposition to it, there are not enough historians with the congenial mental outlook and discipline to make teamwork in the West possible ; and without teamwork and the systematic checking of results among the workers in one field, history must remain isolated and sketchy. But the author has no doubt in his mind that the formation of class and its relation to production are the dialectics of history and that history needs a new orientation.

The outline given is still sketchy. It requires filling up, corroboration and, perhaps, authoritative historians to 'sanction it'! But it is not the aim of this booklet to repeat what has already been sanctioned, much less to write history exclusively. A major section of one of four parts of a survey of modern Egyptian culture is quite enough history, if one wants to keep the balance of the subject matter. The forthcoming two parts, with the exception of a dozen or so pages dealing with the Turkish and European periods, will be devoted entirely to the survey of contemporary culture in Egypt.

In the hope that this approach will be followed up by Egyptian historians, that their work on these lines will be more scientific, scholarly

and comprehensive than this outline, and that they will thus let go the apron strings of their Western 'alma mater,' the author claims the tolerance of Eastern and Western readers alike. One thing is certain: if Egypt is eager to walk on a level with the advanced states of the world, the tempo of its development must be quicker than that of Europe. In science and industry it must not work with discarded machinery, or on theories and ideas which the West itself is shaking off. Egypt must possess the most up-to-date methods, even if they are not yet tried by the West, even if the testing of them entails the feeling of insecurity, even if the break with the past becomes of necessity violent.

The reason prompting the author to wish that his countrymen would break away from the idealistic philosophy and academic traditions of Western Europe is neither a craving for originality nor the desire to be different. It is the knowledge that Europe's mental, in common with its industrial, output is becoming increasingly hampered by the contradictions within its economic system. In no subject is this more obvious than in history where national loyalty, politics, and the material benefits accruing from propagating class knowledge seem to combine to choke the source of empirical research, or to divert its flow. It serves no purpose therefore for Egyptians to follow in the footsteps of Western Europe. For Egypt to produce anything of permanency her men and women must strike new ground in the study of their own economic and social problems—a study based on present local needs, be they cultural or material. We must be as free from a European interpretation and viewpoint as we should be from the fetters of our own past

London, 1947.

M. M. MOSHARRAFA.

HISTORY

The Pharaonic Period

The history of the Pharaonic period is based mainly on the study of the inscriptions and monuments in the tombs and temples of ancient Egypt. Prior to the nineteenth century, historians had to depend on secondhand accounts of the classical writers such as Herodotus, Diodorus and Strabo. With an eye for the miraculous, characteristic of ancient historians, the Greek writers recorded a great deal of fantastic nonsense about the wonders of the "black land," but they also gave a list of the Pharaohs copied from an Egyptian historian of the third century B.C called Manetho, which proved later to have some value. The ancient writers are not the only strangers to Egypt who have recorded fantastic nonsense; in our own days tourists, missionaries and the British Israelites seem to follow in their footsteps.

With their incursion into Africa, the Europeans found it expedient to study the history and customs of its peoples. Egyptology developed as a branch of activity which the rich European intelligentsia made their own. At first, foreign travellers, inspired by a spirit akin to that of the early settlers of America, scoured the country for such antiques and treasures as could be found above ground by the simple peasants. A profitable but illicit trade was established with Egypt. Priceless works of art, relics and papyri (e.g., the *Codex Sinaiticus*) were pirated out of the country. Some of the treasures made of gold and precious stones were sold for their intrinsic value. As the European dilettante gave way to the amateur antiquarian, private collectors increased, the treasure hunt fervour gave way to systematic excavations financed by rich industrialists and cultural institutions. These received a percentage of their finds as a

price for their labour. Egyptology grew into a science with excavation and the introduction of scientific methods. The last of the great European Egyptologists is Sir Flinders Petrie; the first was the French scholar Champollion, who deciphered hieroglyphics which helped considerably to clarify history. Gradually the private collections in Egypt, Europe and America are finding their way to museums—an indication that the antiquarians' trade is on the wane. No country has given so many of its ancient relics to the world, and no relics have been so shamelessly commercialised. Even the mummies of children had, at one time, a market value.*

Egyptology is no longer an exclusive field for non-Egyptian excavators. With the advent of the second world war, the activities of the European and American Egyptologists were suspended. The Egyptian universities continued the work. But even before 1939 a school of Egyptian Archaeologists had been set up. Professor Mostapha Amer and Professor Selim Hassan have both established a reputation for themselves in this field. But it was mainly the war which cleared the field for Egyptian excavators. At the present time there are more of them working in Egypt than there are Europeans.

On the publicity given to the monuments of ancient Egypt was based the tourist trade. The Egyptian landscape, being flat, has little attraction for Europeans, and there are other countries which have an equivalent share of sunshine yet are free from this parasitic trade. Travel is an education but tourism is an affectation taken advantage of by commercial procurators. Like most trades depending on the rich, it is highly lucrative.

Egypt of the tourists is a land of luxury hotels, exotic curio and scent shops, oriental bazaars and shadowy back streets. It is a Nile afloat with palatial dahabiyas and glamorous feluccas. From the balconies of Shepheard's Hotel and the decks of Cook's river steamers the tourists see Egypt as a land of incredible romance—a cheap, perverted romance, which has deflected itself back into the literature of their native lands. That literature has become a world of escapism for the discontented

* See "A Series of Adventures in the Course of a Voyage up the Red Sea on the Coasts of Arabia and Egypt," by E Irwin, London, 1780 (pp 372-373).

millions—a good thing for the tourist trade as it lures more of the rich to Egypt, but a bad thing for Western literature. Round this vicious circle has revolved a clandestine orb of morbidly curious, sexually frustrated, neurotic eccentrics whose unwholesome desires find easy gratification while they have the money to pay. It is strange that of all the continents, Africa seems to have attracted most of the mentally sick.

The history of Egypt is divided into thirty dynasties, and the dynasties into kingdoms. The pre-dynastic era ends long before the pyramids were built. The dynastic era marks certain definite stages of development in agricultural civilisation. The first dynasty marks the full maturity of a class society built on serf agriculture and with the family as an institution. Absolute monarchy, families as landowners, the invention of writing, sun and sky gods, the unification of neighbouring *nomes* into a nation and the choice of a city for a capital—all these presuppose a well-established class society. One must assume a long line of petty kings ruling in pre-dynastic Egypt; one cannot assume more than a moderate degree of class culture, apart from that which the people inherit from tribal society, such as the making of beads or pottery. In religion the primitive animal and tree worship characteristic of the tribe had already been fused into the worship of class gods. The result was tales and fables, dogma and the "other world," chaos among idols and totems and an anaemic, class pantheon. High above reigned the king-god Ra, the *nouveau-riche* of the pantheon. He was an arrogant usurper who faked a celestial family-tree, yet he despised the bestial ancestry of the lesser divinities. Once Anubis had been a jackal, Sekhemet a wild cat, Khonsu a hawk and Thoth an ibis. They had been the ancient totem aristocracy thousands and thousands of years before Ra was born. They were sacred to their tribe because they had brought economy to its labour and vitality to its culture. Under the tyranny of Ra they had to wear human garb and carry boats, moon disks, feathers and even asps on their heads. Ra mutilated them beyond recognition. He twisted them into the formal symbols for the minor classes which had split from his own—for the clerks, the priests and the gravediggers who pandered to the whims of his own landed class. These once sacred animals of

the Egyptian pagan world became so dead that they were entered as mere letters in hieroglyphics.

The fourth, besides being the pre-eminent dynasty for pyramid-building, marks the utmost limit of exploitation of a serf class.^{*} Mechanical progress based on the use of tools reached a high level, but tools were not so much to make easy the work for the slaves as to perform the feats impossible by their collective labour. All the mineral wealth of the land was a monopoly* of the Pharaohs who gave the useful metals to the land-owners in exchange for the labour of their slave-gangs. Probably these landowners themselves started as foremen and owned the tools necessary for tilling their farms. The royal monopoly of metals must have played an important part in moulding the structure of the ruling class.

Sociologically the pyramidal structure of the Egyptian nation symbolised the deification of its king. At the apex of the pyramid was the class god, the very spirit of the static landowning families, who had no organic unity and no way of developing their class power. Directly under him, like so many blocks of stone, the landowners kept their servile place. Directly below them at the base of the pyramid came the mute mass of sweating slaves. Artisans and middlemen, craftsmen and clerks, all shared the fate of the workers in serfdom. A dual culture developed, the culture characteristic of the division of agricultural society into exploiters and exploited. For the first, there were awe-inspiring statues and titles, an exuberance of household possessions, a grotesqueness of garb and habit and above all, vast pyramidal tombs—the very manifestation of the desire of the landowners to live unto eternity as parasites on the blood of the slaves. It was essential that the slaves fear their lords and that the lords inspire terror and resignation in their slaves. With that end in view, the land-owners developed a culture for the slaves which was basically didactic, hypnotic, formal and static. Eroticism is the vitalising spirit of all culture. Primitive culture is pervaded with it, but slave culture is void of it. The paradox of this culture was that for the slaves to get a share of joy in their lives, they had to remain in bondage until death.

* It is possible that metal monopoly was older than the monopoly of land.

Slavery made stone building possible. The extensive use of stone in China, India, Babylonia, and among the Aztecs of America, is intimately related to the first appearance of a serf society. With the use of stone the ancient trade of brick-making declined for a time, and its allied art, pottery, degenerated all over the Middle East. The introduction of stone in vase making about then is the explanation. In the same manner that the introduction of aluminium has caused a decline in the use of pewter, the use of stone caused a decline in the use of pottery. In Egypt, stone building started towards the end of the third dynasty, and it was no coincidence that the greatest architect of the age, Imhotep, was not only the king's councillor and philosopher, but was also considered the greatest creator of didactic literature and aphorisms for centuries after his death. He was so much the symbol of his society that he was deified by later generations.

Dual culture remained characteristic throughout Pharaonic history. But the twelfth dynasty marks a further development in serf economy. The contradiction between land monopoly and the patriarchal laws of inheritance split the class of landowners. They had repeatedly become a menace to the god-king so that he had to break their power by force. It was possible for him to do so because already groups resultant from the landowners had made themselves into separate classes with common interests.

Between the seventh and eleventh dynasties there followed a period of chaos. The Pharaohs and the landowners had fallen into the habit of enslaving prisoners of war. Trade was still a matter of organising raids and returning with spoils and prisoners; because the prisoners had been skilled men, they were able in time to free themselves, and Egypt went through a period of "Mameluke Rule." The freed prisoners, having been brought up in the palaces of the rich, were able to fill major posts and finally to usurp the power of their masters.

About the twelfth dynasty the priests and the bureaucrats had grown in sufficient numbers to free themselves from bondage and to give the king

the chance of balancing class power. The mechanical knowledge gained through temple building and the tilling of land was extended on a national scale. Canals, aqueducts, reservoirs were constructed and the desert mines, still a monopoly of the king, were exploited throughout Egypt. Lake Karoun and the province of Fayoum were the crowning achievements of this wholly agricultural kingdom. The application of technique to production on a national scale could not fail to introduce naturalism in art. Culture remained dual, but the arts which catered for the ruling class became more general, more connected with city life, more the outcome of the observations of craftsmen, soldiers, metal-workers and agriculturists in the pursuit of their occupations. It was during the twelfth dynasty that the arts of a purely agricultural kingdom developed to full maturity. Even a casual glance at the mural paintings of that dynasty would convince the observer of the purity of its agricultural pursuits and art.

After the twelfth dynasty all the possibilities of landowning, tool production, class mutation and slavery as the constituents of agricultural society exhausted themselves. Nothing more could have happened in Egypt except repetition, but since nature never repeats itself and since human development is in its essence dynamic, the introduction of a new factor was indicated. Because of Egypt's isolation, hitherto trade had formed no part of its national economy. The Pharaohs invaded other lands, returning with spoils and slaves, but the national economy was agricultural. On the borders, east and south, foreign traders carried on their daily business of barter. On the eastern boundaries they were Semitic,* on the southern boundaries Hamitic. Somewhere in the Arabian peninsula where agriculture was unlikely to develop into the basis of class society, a community of nomadic traders had been growing prosperous by raiding and barter. These were the Hyksos. With the exception of the extreme south, Arabia is a land where class formation was based on trade, not agriculture. Traders are restless people with

* By Semitic is here meant a Mediterranean people whose class development has been mainly a mercantile one.

coercive tactics. There have been more Arabs and Jews, for instance, in other people's lands than Arabia and Judea could ever have held. Traders are empire builders and colonisers. As sheikhs of tribal caravans and nomad clans, they raid and ravage. As a minority they usurp thrones and overthrow governments, but once they grow into a class in power by virtue of economic superiority, they turn into law-abiding citizens, advocate morality, puritanism, chastity, monotheism. They engrave "The Law" on tablets, or fossilise it in sacred verses; their slogans advocate a permanent simplicity of living. This is as true of the Quakers and Unitarians as it was true of the Arabs and Israelites.

The Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, were no barbarians, as historians wish us to believe. Probably they were the traders of the eastern borders of Egypt. History is not clear whether they were Arabs or Israelites; the difference is irrelevant here. The Israelites were the more advanced economically since religiously they were some steps nearer monotheism. Soon after they invaded the country, the Hyksos chose a capital (Avaris) to the east of the Delta. Their power depended on the introduction of the horse and chariot as instruments of war. Their prosperity depended on trade with Lebanon, Crete, Assyria and Babylon. Egypt became a tributary in their vast empire. They laid waste its farms and humiliated its landed aristocracy, who retaliated with implacable hatred. Egypt had always been an oasis cut off from the civilised world by sea and desert. By the very limits of the means of communication of the age, Egypt could not then form a native trading class strong enough to rule in place of its effete landowners. Hence the four hundred years of Hyksos rule. That these worshipped Egyptian gods is no more a sign of their Egyptianisation than are the native clothes and titles of the Brooke family and their entourage a sign of their turning Sarawaki. After the Hyksos, the Romans too took Pharaonic titles and paid homage to the native gods, but they remained Roman and foreign.

From Thebes the landed aristocracy watched the usurpers with mistrust and curiosity. They learnt a great deal, but they were tied to the land. The Hyksos were not, they were a Semitic people who had

based their economy on trade. Raiding they must have done, but they could not have made a habit of it, or their empire would not have lasted for four hundred years. The aristocracy of Thebes must have watched with envy the prosperity of a trading community whom, with the spirit of a farming people, they dubbed barbarians. Barbarians do not interest themselves in mathematics, but traders do. This explains how it is that the mathematical papyri were written under the reign of Apepi I, a Shepherd King. The putting together of mercantile and arithmetical data would result in advance in mathematics. The Sallier Papyrus records that King Apepi II attempted to impose the worship of the Hyksos god on the Theban aristocracy, who resented it violently. For five generations they fought against the alien god until the Hyksos were finally expelled.

The Thebans' triumph was that of a native economy over one alien to the land. As traders the Hyksos inclined towards monotheism* which symbolised their faith in their class as a ruling one. The Theban landed aristocracy were not disposed to let their god play second fiddle to Sutekh; that would have been a denial of their class.

Having learnt their lesson, the Theban aristocracy set out to introduce trade as an element in the national economy, which had to remain basically agricultural. They could not very well employ the Hyksos, so they tried their cousins the Israelites. If the story of Joseph, who came to the help of Pharaoh as a 'chancellor of the exchequer' has any significance, it indicates that the Egyptian ruling class had learnt from the Hyksos the blessings of applying mercantile economy to agriculture. If the account of Exodus has authenticity, it implies that the rulers of the 'New Empire' had enough experience of the coercive methods of foreign traders to drive them out to a safe distance, particularly after having learnt all they had wished to learn from them. The Israelites in retaliation stole not only the jewels of their hosts before leaving the country but also their tales and myths, their aphorisms and proverbs.

* The Hyksos god was called the "Father Sutekh," Lord of Avaris. He was further described as "setting the lands under the king's feet." This is obviously no crocodile deity, but a fully-fledged class god.

When the Egyptians destroyed the city states of the Syrian merchants, their supremacy was established in the Levant. When the Semites no longer constituted a danger to the Thebans, the Thebans felt safe to intermarry with them. Thus, a Semitic strain was introduced into the blood of Thotmes IV and Amenhotep III, who chose wives from the royal house of Mittani. It was under Tii's influence that her son, the great aesthete Akhnaton, reintroduced monotheism. The Thebans had not forgotten the events of a century before. They drove Akhnaton out of Thebes and called him traitor and heretic. They would have nothing to do with the traders' creed. Their own religion was based on a trinity, symbolising their class composition.

Only a class explanation of Pharaonic history on these or similar lines can give it a sense of continuity. Such an interpretation as this gives sense to Christianity and Islam as normal links in the class struggle of the Middle East, which seems to have kept a heterogeneous culture for thousands of years.

It is almost certain that the eighteenth dynasty marked the advent of empires of the type of the Persian, Greek and Roman empires of later history, built on a mixture of trade and agriculture. The ancient kingdoms of Egypt had two main classes—landowners and slaves. The emancipation of craftsmen, soldiers, administrators and the skilled domestic servants of the eighteenth dynasty onward was given impetus by the evolution of slavery in military economy. Vast numbers of the nobility of foreign lands, brought to Egypt as war captives, were first kept in slavery to perform menial work. Gradually the Egyptian aristocracy became aware of the waste of employing them as mere slaves and they were emancipated. This must have created a middle class of professionals and an urge to free the native skilled workers, who together with the emancipated slaves would have formed a third class—the 'bourgeoisie' of the pre-capitalist era.

That the eighteenth dynasty was the triumph of the landowners of Thebes, who had, by then, discovered the benefits of supplementing their economy with a mercantile one, was indicated not only by the commercial

and social development of their empire, but by their religious development. For the first time the Isis-Osiris mystery appeared ; very soon Horus formed a trinity with them. Assuming that the gods in heaven have corresponding classes on earth, one should find a reflection in religion of the growing influence of the Egyptian merchants and the formation of a new class of professionals (soldiers and bureaucrats). It was this religion based on a trinity which expelled the monotheism of Akhnaton. The Egyptian trinity persisted for hundreds of years in all those Mediterranean countries where a trading class was rising. It was popular in the Greek Empire and familiar to the Romans. Roman emperors built temples for the Egyptian triad and identified them with their major gods. Further, the cult of the Isis-Osiris-Horus trinity was the deadliest enemy of the early monotheistic Christianity. Not until the Roman Church adopted a trinitarian creed itself did this cult cease to oppose Christianity.

The 'New Empire' lasted nearly a thousand years. The difference between it and the empires of the pre-capitalist era after it was mainly the increase in the enfranchisement of slaves. The rise and fall of these empires was due to the compromise and clash between the classes.

The Egyptian Empire was built on the use of new alloys and metals (e.g., bronze, tin, lead and iron), on an improvement in workmanship, weapons, tool making and ship building, on the exchange of goods facilitated by reference to a standard metal. When it became a fully fledged empire it had trade routes by sea and land extending as far north as Britain, as far south as the Equator, as far east as China. It had viceroys and emissaries abroad and a highly centralised government at home. Religion characterised its slave culture ; elegance, romance and grandeur its ruling class culture. There were avenues of ram-headed sphinxes, the Valley of the Kings, gigantic statues—The Colossi of Memnon, public gardens, artificial lakes and zoos, imposing state buildings—the Temple of Hatshepsut, the Great Hall of Karnak, the Ramasseum. In short, most of the bourgeois culture one associates with the Victorians was present, only on a much smaller scale. Painting is an art seemingly

congenial to the middle class temperament; and here again one finds affinity in ancient Egypt with the Victorians. There was the same delight in depicting fluttering ribbons and prancing horses, the use of seductive curves in portraying the female figures, over-decoration, excessive attention to detail, formalism, the copying of previous styles and the importation of foreign ones which remained isolated from the native culture. As Sir Flinders Petrie put it, "The cheapest road to effect was the favourite way."

Nevertheless, the 'New Empire' marks an important stage in the development of modern civilisation.

The Persian Period

Pharaonic history came to an end in 525 B.C. and the Arab Conquest began in A.D. 639. During the intervening eleven and a half centuries most of the elements of the Pharaonic civilisation had either been destroyed or absorbed by the civilisations of successive invaders.

The first of these invaders were the Persians who remained in the country for nearly two hundred years (525-332 B.C.). They were followed by the Greeks, and for three hundred years (332-30 B.C.), the Ptolemies became the ruling dynasty. For the next six hundred years the Romans made Egypt a province of their empire.

(The Persians left no lasting cultural impressions on the country. A few place names, the ruins of a temple in a remote oasis, and a reference in history to a canal which joined the Red Sea with the Mediterranean through the Nile, are all that the modern Egyptians associate with the early Persian conquerors.) It is quite probable that their ascendancy lay in the superiority of arms. The class structure of their empire was similar to that of the 'New Empire.' From the beginning of the Persian

Conquest by Cambyses, the Persians worshipped the Egyptian gods. Gradually they fell under the influence of the temple priests and eventually they became Egyptians. (Whatever Persian influence one finds to-day in Egypt has come later, that is, since the conquest by the Arabs. Having broken up the two empires on their border, the Arabs found among the Romans little culture and less science worthy of appropriation. To the early Moslems the Romans were the symbol of degeneracy, an example of what men should not be. But the Arabs learnt a great deal from the science and culture of the Persians. As the Moslems settled in Egypt and their civilisation prospered, and the Persians were made citizens of the Moslem Empire, Persian crafts, music, literature and sports became a part of the heritage which was later to be associated with Arabic culture in Egypt.)

The Greek Period

The Greek Conquest was in more than one respect due to a superior civilisation. The Greeks had probably gone much farther than either the Egyptians or the Persians in making a mercantile economy part of the national one. In statesmanship, arms, science and medicine, in navigation and industry, the Greeks of the fourth century before Christ were superior to the Egyptians. By that time the civilisation of the Greeks had assimilated practically all that was vital in Pharaonic civilisation. Egypt and Greece had been in close touch with each other for centuries. Through trade and travel the Greeks had come to acquaint themselves with the secrets, not only of Egyptian craftsmanship, but also of science and literature. The Greek Conquest was not sudden. For at least a century the Greeks had settled in the north of Egypt as traders. They lived their own lives and kept their culture. For a long time after Alexander the Great the Ptolemies settled down in the isolation of aliens

and made Alexandria their capital. It soon became the capital of the whole world. Nowhere outside Athens did Greek culture and learning shine with such brilliancy, and within Greece itself not even Athens could boast of more illustrious names in science. The empire of the Ptolemies was based on the monopolies it made of the crops and the industrial products of Egypt — of the papyrus and linen trades, the oil products, corn and wines. Undoubtedly the splendour of Alexandria was the result of mercantile economy, and its famous lighthouse was the symbol of the triumph of the traders. In the artistic life of the Ptolemies new importation from Greece survived only when the corresponding native art was degenerate. When the native art was vital, it resisted Greek influence and stood its ground in competition with the foreign *genre*.

Thus in sculpture and architecture most of the monuments of the period preserved their national Pharaonic features side by side with the purely Greek architecture and sculpture. Towards the end there was an attempt at fusion of Greek and Egyptian styles. It is not known with what degree of success the Greco-Egyptian artist accomplished his work, particularly in sculpture, but what monuments remain of the late Ptolemaic period exhibit an earnest search after a union of two styles, which in their very nature were irreconcilable.

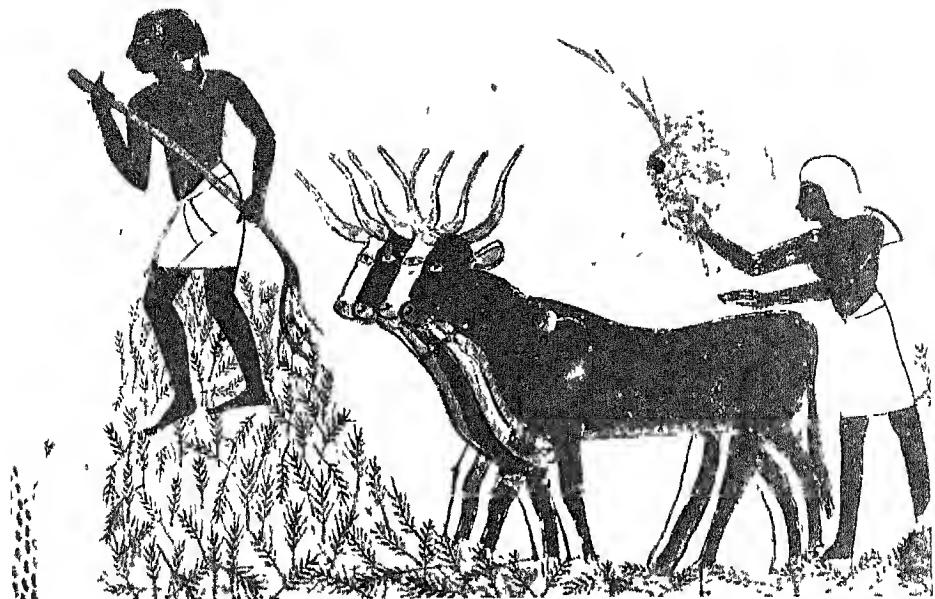
The Greeks conceived art as something beautiful which was added to life, an aesthetic pursuit worthy of the cultured citizens of Athens. When it degenerated Greek art became decorative. In the case of *genre* sculpture, where the maimed, the syphilitic and the abnormal were portrayed with remarkable realism, Greek art had abundant beauty as a standard and had concerned itself for the first time with the representation of natural forms. This development took place in Alexandria.

Of Alexandria, its lighthouse and its university, of Archimedes, Plotinus, Ptolemy the mathematician, Sostratus the architect, and the splendid names of the Ptolemaic scientists, most history books give a fair picture. This survey is concerned with an estimation rather than a statement of history. It is worth while, however, to expose here

a common error prevalent among idealists. It has often been said that science at its best is pure (in opposition to applied); that applied science came as a result of pure science, and that all progress depends on a kind of innate disinterested inquisitiveness, the satisfaction of which is expressed by "knowledge for the sake of knowledge." This is a superficial interpretation of history. The craftsman rather than the scientist is responsible for human progress. The tendency to glorify the scholar and the professional man is peculiarly a class tendency which did not exist before the capitalist era. It was the exploitation of the craftsman as an industrial worker which reversed the historic view on progress. To preserve the class *'amour propre'* the intelligentsia belittled the craftsman's social standard and subordinated his importance to theirs. They had the means of publicity, of which they took advantage.

The civilisation of Alexandria lacked both that multiplicity of locality and the intensity of the challenge of environment which enabled European civilisation to develop into the industrialisation of the nineteenth century. The industrial development in Sicily at the time of Archimedes, which was given impetus by the wars between Hiero and the Romans, was too short-lived to allow of an extensive exchange of discoveries with Alexandria, and Archimedes (circa 287 B.C.), who was the principal craftsman and military technician of the age, was killed by the Romans. With the exception of the screw, which he invented during his stay in Alexandria, all his inventions were lost to posterity.

In Europe the Renaissance blossomed forth in various centres. There were many guilds and corporations of craftsmen and merchants in Italy, France, Holland, England, which allowed of multiplicity and transfer of products—of drugs, textiles, glassware, clocks, armour, cannon, and the merchandise of the smith, the shipwright and the potter. These goods were shifted through commerce from one medieval city to another, to be improved on or imitated. The leisurely monk and the vagabond scholar, the skilled craftsman and the beggarly artist, the rascally alchemist and the mercenary soldier all attended the marriage of industry and



TOMB OF MENA



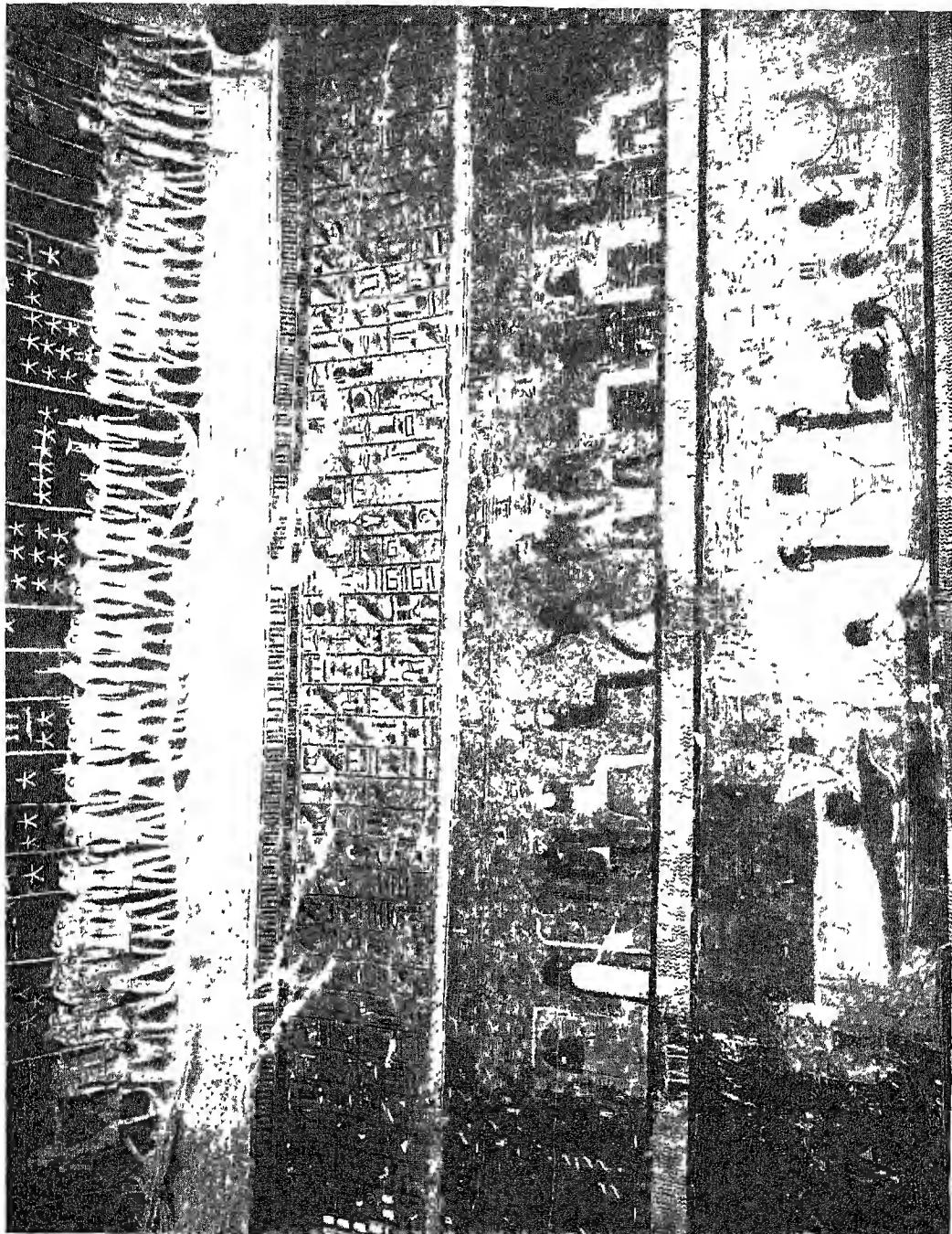
ALABASTER PERFUME VASE
FROM TUTANKAMEN'S TREASURES
(Note introduction of foreign style
and themes)



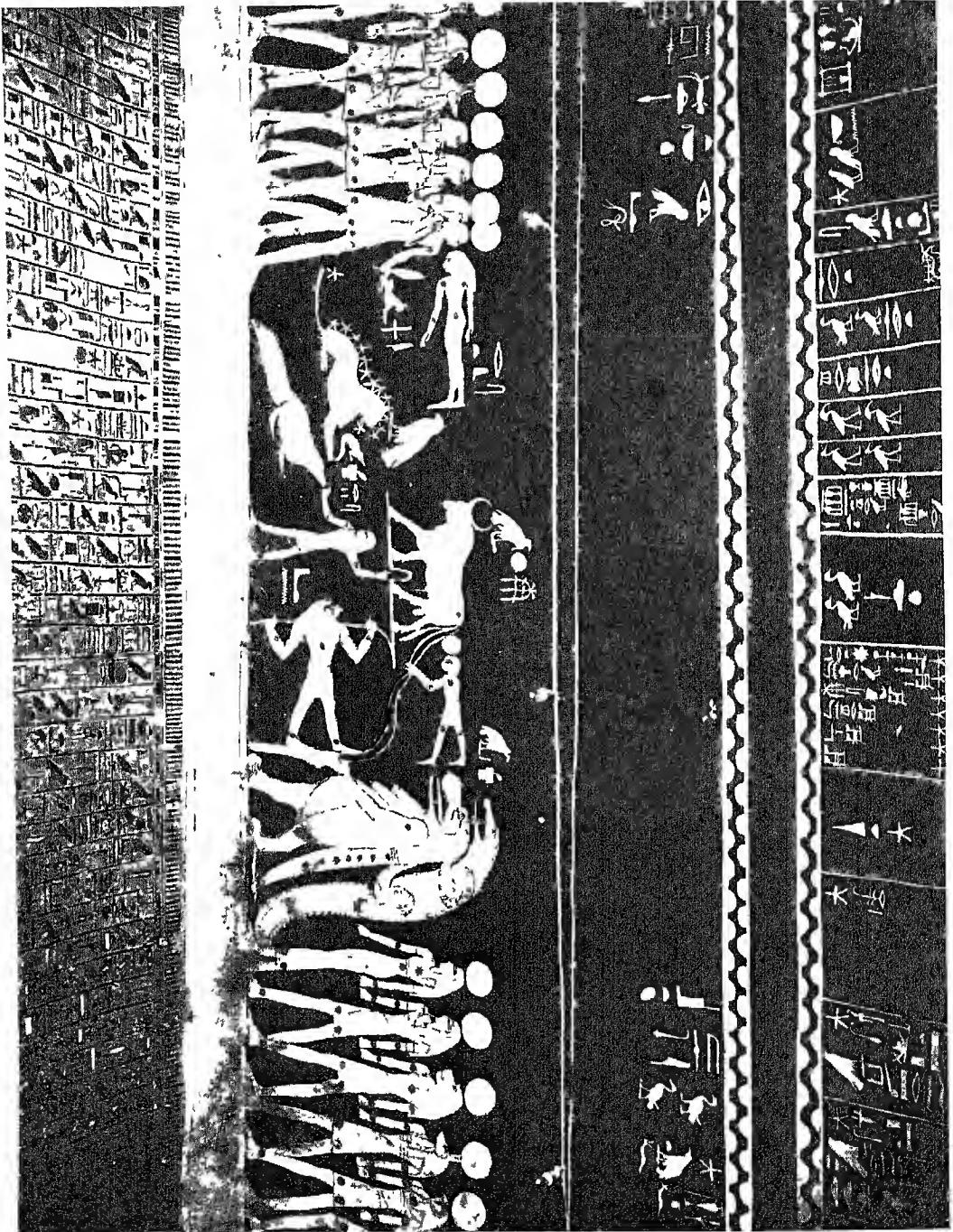
AVENUE OF SPHINXES, KARNAK



PAPYRUS PILLARS OF AMENHOTEP III



TOMB OF SETI I
(Note over-decoration)



ANOTHER SECTION OF THE TOMB OF SETI I
(Note grace of line)

science. The medieval princes paid the dowry. The handsomest wedding gift came from China in the form of gunpowder.

This could not have happened in the case of Alexandria: the city was isolated in its glory. The division of the empire of Alexander into three dominions separated it economically from Athens. Later, when Rome grew into a fine city, the Romans lived on imported luxury. It was inferior in craftsmanship and science. The products of the Greco-Egyptian craftsman were mainly exchanged with backward nations. In return, Alexandria received ivory or incense, precious stones, metal, wood or manufactured products from inferior races. One can no more imagine Alexandria making technical advances through such an exchange of goods than one can imagine England improving technically through her trade with Africa to-day. On the other hand, the technical advance gained in the near past through exchange of goods between America, Germany, England and France is undeniable.

We must admit, then, that neither the library of Alexandria nor its university nor its handful of brilliant scientists and philosophers could have produced enough research workers to satisfy the conditions necessary for the development of craftsmanship into mechanised industry. Athens and Alexandria were politically and economically divorced. The products of first-class craftsmanship of the best articles were monopolised by a handful of rulers and courtiers. The university men and craftsmen alike soon degenerated into servitors pandering to the pleasures of the Greek Pharaohs. Craftsmen degenerated into producers of gaudy goods and professors were diverted into the vacuum of astrology to predict happiness and victory for the weakling Pharaohs. When the stars led them astray and the Pharaohs turned against them, they walked into the labyrinth of mysticism and the limbo of metaphysics.

The external reason for the fall of the Ptolemies was the rise of the Roman Empire. For half a century before they occupied Egypt they paralysed its trade and made themselves masters of the Mediterranean.

Many remains of the Greek period of the Ptolemies are still to be seen in Egypt: the temple of Philae, various temples at Kom-Ombo, Dandarah,

Edfu, Esna and numerous statues and relics in the many museums. There are also many towns and villages in Egypt with Arabic names corrupted from the Greek, and to this day the peasants use the tambour or Archimedean screw.

More interesting than Greek relics and names is the literature of the Ptolemaic period which survives among the people and which must have been handed down orally from generation to generation.

An example familiar to many an Egyptian boy is the story* of the Maamour (police officer) who was enamoured of the young farmer's wife. In the absence of the husband, the Maamour comes to seduce the good lady by threats and the glamour of his uniform. The young wife resorts to guile, telling him she will gladly be his but for an afreit which haunts the house and which will be sure to tell her husband. The Maamour dismisses the notion of afreits and devils with contempt, but the young wife describes how the afreit haunts the house by night, screaming out everything she does, and how it hides in the well by day, listening to everything she says. The Maamour asks sarcastically to be shown the well. The young wife leads him to it and as he bends over its mouth, shouting defiance to the imaginary afreit, seizes his ankles and tips him headlong into the well. This is obviously the handed-down version of Plutarch's story of the Macedonian officer in the army of Alexander. Plutarch relates as history that the house of a Theban lady was looted by a Macedonian officer who, after insulting her, demands her jewellery. She pretends to have hidden it in a well and as he looks down to see she pushes him over and finishes him off by throwing stones down the well. The matter is brought to the notice of Alexander, who pardons the lady, in spite of her defiance, for bravery in defending her possessions. There is little doubt that similar tales and anecdotes from the days of the Greeks, the Romans and the Pharaohs have survived to this day in the folklore of the Egyptian people. Mothers and the wandering minstrels have kept alive the old tales of the various phases in our history.

* A translated version of the same story is given in the Masterpiece Library of the Best Thousand Short Stories of The World. It is translated from Tasali Ramadan.

Cleopatra is the link between the Greek and Roman periods. She was the last royal sovereign of Egypt to wear Pharaonic garb and follow ancient Egyptian customs. Whatever her personal qualities may have been, Plutarch depicted her as the mistress of the Roman rulers. Shakespeare saw the mature "grand love" in her relations with Antony, and Shaw, being more concerned with Caesar, concentrated on her girlhood, making of her a naive girl in keeping with the spirit of modern musical comedy.

To the western variation on the theme of Cleopatra the late Egyptian poet, Shawki, added that of the patriotic queen who would not stop short of immorality for the sake of saving her country. Critics object to Shawki's interpretation on the grounds of her Greek origin, but she was as much an Egyptian queen as the descendants of William the Conqueror were English.

As a dramatic piece, Shawki's "Cleopatra" is neither opera as the West knows it, nor yet a play in verse. Had it not been for his dazzling genius in imitating classical poetry, no critic would have been deceived into thinking that the piece had any dramatic merit, or that its language is a fit medium for the modern Egyptian stage. It is as if a contemporary English poet were to write in the idiom and the style of Marlowe.

The Roman Period

The "New Empire," which began with the eighteenth dynasty, was the first of its kind ; the last of the same kind was the Roman. European historians and politicians are inclined to over-estimate its importance in the development of civilisation. In the opinion of the writer, the Romans are the most cruel, the least intellectually productive, of all the peoples of ancient history. Road making is supposed to be a Roman development, but long before their time the Persian Empire of Darius was traversed by roads which linked Persia with Anatolia, Anatolia with Thrace, and Lybia with Syria and Greece. These highways, which stretched for thousands of miles, were dotted with posts where horses stood ready to carry the

Persian travellers and officials from province to province. As for law, in the Roman Empire it was mainly the outward expression of the privilege and power of the militant bureaucracy. The dominance of law is the outcome of militarism; its subtleties and ingenuities are but signs of its unsuitability for expressing relations in society.

Behind the glory of Rome, in her conception of law and her system of government, one looks in vain for a contribution to human thought and culture. One sees little more than the theatrical pomp and colour of an arrogant militarism comparable to that of the liquidated Ottoman Empire or the defeated Nazi state.

Politically, the Roman Empire was the last attempt to strike a balance between the constituent elements of the ruling class—mercantile, landowning and bureaucratic. When the attempt failed, Europe became feudal, i.e., the landowners' interest again became dominant. Culturally it was a parasitic growth upon Greek culture and art. Religiously, a vicious climber which entwined itself round the young, delicate shrub of Christianity, disfiguring it into an imperialist creed. In its dogmatic stress on the Trinity it was not so much the philosophic concept which the theologians of the fourth century wished to preserve, it was the conflicting interests of the ruling class of the Empire, the interests of soldier, aristocrat and trader which gave birth to the Triumvirate and the Republic, the intrigues and the dictators characteristic of Roman history. Roman Christianity became a snare to trap the subject peoples of the Empire into the service of senators and magistrates. When all roads led to Rome they carried African slaves and Asiatic spoils; when the Romans went to Egypt they turned it into a granary to ensure food for the imperial armies.*

One associates the Roman Empire with such superfluities as the Column of Diocletian in Alexandria, or that of Nelson in Trafalgar Square, or with the harangues of Mussolini and the propaganda of Goebbels: things pointless and futile.

* A favourite form of Roman robbery was to debase the currency and export the goods bought with it. The Egyptians in the end reverted to barter.

Other Roman monuments still to be seen in modern Egypt, besides the Column of Diocletian, are the remains of the Serapeum and numerous statues in the museums of Cairo and Alexandria.

Christianity

It is probable that early Christianity bore a relation to the Roman Empire similar to that which Gandhism to-day bears to the British Empire, especially if we keep in mind the difference in the means of production between the two civilisations. Outwardly the two movements took the form of ethical creeds forbidding the use of violence in the face of aggression. Inwardly they rested on genuine psychological impulses which have no permanency. They seek in the passive behaviour of the individual the pacification of society. Implicitly they expressed economic theories advocating self-sufficiency on a minimum of production. When Christ advocates the selling of all one has as the way to salvation, or when He makes it a part of one's daily prayers to ask for one's daily bread, He obviously recommends living from hand to mouth. The Roman soldier or the tax-collector coming to a village with such economy would find nothing to requisition. Similarly with Gandhi ; if every peasant spun and wove his loin-cloth and tilled his field to feed himself and his family alone, if every public servant lived on the charity of his community in return for his services, there would be no surplus value in the work of Indian masses for others to appropriate.

Both Christianity and Gandhism have appeared on the outskirts of huge empires and have spread among subject races. They are essentially modes of behaviour recommended by passive idealists since it is reasonable to assume that Gandhi did not seriously mean Indian industrialists to give up their mills and factories in exchange for village looms, and it is reasonable to assume likewise that the Hebrew patriarch of Palestine, no less than the Roman magistrate or officer, was not in the habit of having his face

slapped, neither had he need to beg for his daily bread, nor are these sayings mere parables and symbols. To this day they are the practical precepts indicated by the harsh realities of life in an oppressed peasant community. The divorce of religion from politics, the temporal from the spiritual, is a western convention based on development in industry. Just as Gandhism to-day is a spiritual as well as a political creed, so was early Christianity. It was the revolutionary passive creed of a subject race—the general strike weapon in a different form. Its danger was soon realised by the Romans who took it over in self-defence and organised it into a church, an ally of the state in keeping down the subject races of the Empire. In the light of these remarks Western readers may find it easier to understand the history of the Coptic church.

According to tradition both Eastern and Western, it was St. Mark the Evangelist, one of the four writers of the Gospels, who founded the Egyptian or Coptic Church in the city of Alexandria about the year A.D. 40, during the reign of Nero. Egyptian tradition has it that St. Mark was born in Pentapolis. It was he whom the apostles met before the Last Supper, carrying a pitcher of water. In his house Christ celebrated the Passover. After the Resurrection, when Christ appeared to his disciples, the apostles gathered secretly in the house of Mark for fear of the Jews.

But Egypt is more intimately connected with the founder of Christianity than any other country outside Palestine. It is the only foreign country He saw. According to tradition the Holy Family rested under the "Tree of Mary," which still stands in Matariah (a suburb of Cairo) to this day. This tree is an ancient gnarled sycamore. Its bark is shrivelled and its lower branches dead and brown, crusted as the shrouded limbs of an Egyptian mummy. Yet from its upward branches green boughs flourish and young sprigs shoot forth miraculously. Again, tradition has it that Mary lived in a house in old Cairo; a Coptic church still stands on the site of the Egyptian home of Christ.

Before his death St. Mark appointed Hananais first patriarch of the Coptic Church and ordained twelve presbyters to ensure prompt accession

by election from among them. The Coptic Church followed this system well into the fourth century, when Patriarch Alexander ceded the right of election to the bishops, who elected the new patriarch not necessarily from among the presbyters. It is interesting to note that this tradition was taken up by nineteenth century Presbyterians in Great Britain as the basis of church government.

After Hananais there followed a number of persecutions of the growing church. Under Trajan, Hadrian, Severus Maximus, and last, but not least, Diocletian, hundreds of thousands of Egyptian Christians lost their lives in martyrdom. In the last wave of butchery under Diocletian no less than 140,000 Copts were murdered, and so unforgettable was his reign that it marks the beginning of the Coptic era—the Era of Martyrs. The majority of the modern Copts are Jacobites. All through their church history the two factions of Jacobites and Malekites have made the distinction between those who revolted against the Roman emperor and those who accepted the Roman church under the Emperor of Constantinople. Malekite means royalist; Jacobite comes from Jacobus Baradeus, a monophysite theologian who was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon. The Malekites were the Greco-Roman party, the Jacobites the Egyptian. So bitter did the enmity between the two factions become later that a Copt was forbidden marriage with a follower of the Greek or Roman church and yet allowed to marry a Moslem.

In Part I of this Survey the reader will find a brief comment on how Roman persecution had led the Egyptians to leave their homes and retreat into the desert from the fourth century onward. There is also an estimation of the influence of Coptic monasticism on European Christianity, and of how the ideal ascetic life of the Egyptian deserts was held among the monks as far north as Ireland and Scotland to be the perfection of self-conquest. Invariably the native patriarch elected by the people had to hide in desert monasteries, then these would be sacked by the Roman soldiers and the native monks butchered. This state of things went on to the time of Pope Gregory and after. English schoolboys will remember that it was during his days that St. Augustine's mission came to England to convert the people.

The modern Coptic patriarch holds authority over the whole of Egypt; he is called traditionally the Patriarch of Alexandria. He is also the recognised head of the Abyssinian Church. Until this day he is chosen from among monks of one of the major monasteries of the desert. Some of the rites and customs of the patriarch go back farther than Christianity to the ancient Egyptian religion. For example, the wearing of wool next the skin, the half-hourly vigil, the prescription of a certain diet and the receiving of food gifts from his people are all in continuity with the rites and customs of Pharaonic priests.

Of the ancient monasteries which remain to this day, the most famous are Deir Mari-Antonios which lies on the slope of Mount Kolzim overlooking the Gulf of Suez (probably fifth century), the deirs which lie in Wadi-en-Natrun, the monastery of St. Catherine (fourteenth century) in Sinai, and Deir el-Abiad, the White Monastery (early fourth century) near Suhag in the lap of the Lybian hills. This monastery preserves the ancient Egyptian temple architecture to a remarkable degree.

Coptic architecture as exemplified in churches and monasteries is a mixture of what the Europeans call the Basilican and the Byzantine styles—the dome they think Byzantine and the main rectangular structure Basilican. But the dome belongs to Indian architecture and it is more likely that Alexandria introduced it to Byzantine architecture rather than the reverse. The Basilican type of architecture is basically Pharaonic; what Roman influence it had came later, during the period when Coptic art, particularly sculpture, degenerated into imitation.

In modern Egypt there is very little influence of Coptic architecture in dwellings or even in church building. Building material has become so changed that such a revival would seem uneconomic, yet certain teachers of the College of Fine Art, particularly Mr. Wassif, have tried to plan model villages and rural schools which are built of unbaked bricks in the medieval Coptic style. It is doubtful, however, if such attempts would ever amount to more than archaic curiosities.

Coptic architecture seems to have influenced English church building. According to Gilbert Scott ("English Church Architecture") the

orientation of the altar, doorway and so on, in European churches was borrowed from the Coptic churches. Ledwich, in "Antiquities of Ireland" (pages 88, 89) mentioned that in the Isle of Lerins, off the coast of France, there settled some Egyptians who introduced their architecture to Europe. He further mentioned that Glastonbury Cathedral was built on an Egyptian plan.

Behind the Roman persecutions was a combination of national strife, pestilence and floods, of the destruction of corn and the failure of crops which made it impossible for the people to pay taxes or supply Rome with wheat. All through history the readjustment of social relations in favour of a class, be it native or foreign, has been followed by economic distress. Inevitably economic distress stimulates the human mind to question beliefs and doubt tradition. Hence a dispute over Christian dogma and ethics took place very early in the history of the church in areas of the Roman Empire where the people were visited by famine and disease. The questioning and doubt, when mild, became movements of reform, but when they threatened drastically the interests of the ruling class or of the prosperous spiritual lords, then they were given such coloured terms as anathema or heresy. Heresy appeared in Egypt as soon as there were enough Greek and Roman Christians to form a class of opposing interest to the Egyptians. Subconsciously the opposition was national and economic, consciously it was a dispute between Egyptian and Greco-Roman theologians. Before Christianity became the creed of the Roman Empire, a similar dispute of gods and divinity, particularly that of the emperor himself, prevailed among the temple priests. As a god recognised by the Egyptians, the emperor could have claimed allegiance, and this would have meant the legitimate delivery of corn, honey and gold to Rome. The Egyptians had disputed the celestial origin of the emperor, had declined the honour of serving in his legions and had consequently suffered not only the physical violence of the Romans but also the maligning of their historians and writers. All through history the interest of a ruling class, the insolence of power and wealth and the desire to preserve the class **amour propre** have led an imperialist power, in its dealing with a subject race, to act on the principle of giving a dog a

bad name in order to hang him. This applies particularly to European imperialism towards the end of the nineteenth century. Its writers seem to have distributed all the human vices among the subject races of the East, keeping the virtues for themselves.

From the fourth century onwards the Christian church of Alexandria grew into a national church. It became Coptic in defiance of the church of Rome, which was rapidly becoming the symbol of Roman tyranny. Dioscorus, a patriot of Alexandria, who died in A.D. 454, defended Eutyches who was accused of "appollinarianism."^{*} Leo the Great, who was the first to use the title Pope (he was before that called Bishop of Rome) and the Patriarch Flavian of Constantinople, both resented Dioscorus for defending one whom they considered a heretic. Pope Leo, with the help of the Emperor Theodosius, summoned the bishops to a general council which deposed Dioscorus, then Patriarch of Alexandria. The Coptic Church resented his deposition and ignored the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. From that time the Egyptian church held to the difference which distinguished it from the European Christianity of both Rome and Constantinople. When Rome imposed a patriarch on Egypt, such as Pretorius, he could not appear in the streets of Alexandria without a military guard. This hostility between the Coptic Church and Roman Christianity ceased only with the Arab invasion (A.D. 639) by which time the Egyptians hated the Romans so much that they hailed the Moslem Arabs as deliverers.

Yet another aspect of the theology of the fifth century is significant in understanding how the Moslems view Christ and understand Christianity. Nestorius, who died in A.D. 451, was banished into Arabia, where he preached his creed. Even to this day his teachings live in Persia, Syria and India. According to Nestorians, the Lord Jesus Christ was not God but only of God—a man who could not sin, a man superabundantly blessed and inspired by God.

* A creed which taught that Christ was a man and that His Divinity supplied the place of a human soul.

Nestorianism was but one of a variety of beliefs sprung from the theology of Arius. Anastasius, for instance, declared in Constantinople that the Virgin Mary was not literally the Mother of God as she was a human being herself and a deity could not be born of humanity. Nestorius held the same view, adding that the Divinity of the World is to be distinguished from the bearer of Christ's human form and the temple of His flesh. Yet another Christian form of Gnosticism prevalent in Arabia was that Jesus, proceeding from God, was sent to reveal Him to mankind. The Gnostics of the fourth century A.D., although believing in the miracles of Christ, maintained that He never suffered crucifixion and that the body on the Cross was but a phantom. It is easy to discern in this pre-Islamic theology of the Christian faith in Arabia the doctrines of Islam pertaining to Christ and Christianity.

It is equally easy to discover a common denominator in all the so-called heresies of early Christianity: (a) in origin they all come from the Levant, i.e., from among the trading people who produced the "heresy" of Akhnaton; (b) they are all more or less monotheistic, in violent opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity held tenaciously by Rome. The Egyptians were not monotheists if we consider their class structure; strictly speaking, had it not been for Roman domination, they would have passed happily from paganism to the Trinity of Christianity. They had, by then, three distinct classes—landowners, traders, and bureaucrats, including the priests. The Trinity would have fitted their classes nicely, but there was Rome and the oppression of Rome to drive them to a creed in opposition to the Trinity. This explains why they tended to be monotheists and why most of their theologians were of Syrian origin. Later on, when the Arabs governed Egypt, and Rome ceased to be their national enemy, the Coptic church reverted unobtrusively to an emphasis on the Trinity. It dropped the creed of Macarius which began, "I believe in one God the Almighty Father, and in the Logos of one substance with Him."

The Arabs know Christ as 'Issa, the Prophet, or Al-Masseeh, the Messiah; the Christians as Nassara, or those of Nazareth, and Christianity as the doctrine of Nazareth. The Koran speaks of Christ as a prophet, a

messenger of God. It mentions the miracle of His birth, that Mary was a virgin and that God "breathed his own spirit over her and thus a man was conceived." But the doctrine of redemption is alien to Islam which speaks of Christ as a messenger of God. Like so many messengers before Him, He suffered persecution. The Koran clearly states that Christ was not crucified. He was raised to heaven and what His persecutors saw on the Cross was a phantom. This theological view of Christianity seemed satisfactory to the Moslems for two reasons: (a) the sacrifice on the Cross, if ascribed to a divinity, would become commonplace and the whole drama of the Cross would lose its poignancy since the omniscient and almighty God would have no need to resort to such action; (b) the supreme sacrifice of oneself for the sake of others is a human act often repeated in history long before Christ was born and thousands of times since His death. Self-sacrifice is not enhanced by the strength and perfection of him who sacrifices himself, it is made inspiring by his frailty and his humanity. Nevertheless, Christ the sinless, the Moslems maintain, could not have been crucified; such an act would ascribe an injustice to God. Hence the phantom version.

The Prophet Mohammed

Islam is an integral part of the life of Egypt to-day; it would not be redundant here to give a brief biography of the Prophet Mohammed.

He was born in Mecca in the year A.D. 570 and died at the age of sixty-three. Until he was forty he was a caravan-leader, married to the elderly "Lady Khadija," on whose behalf he had journeyed several times into foreign lands to exchange merchandise. She was fifteen years older than Mohammed, who was twenty-five when they married. They remained together until her death twenty-three years later. Mohammed was nick-named al-Amin, "the honest"; as a merchant he acquired the

reputation of being truthful and dependable. From early youth he had shown deep interest in religion ; frequently he would go out into the desert to a certain cavern near Mecca to meditate. At the age of forty he felt called upon by God to be His messenger, to bring back the people to the ancient religion of Abraham, as the Koran put it.

The tribes of Arabia were then mostly pagan, but in Mecca where the Prophet received the revelation, the Jewish and Christian faiths were familiar to many. The strongest of all the tribes of Arabia for some time before Mohammed was banu-Quraish, its most influential clans were banu-abd-Manaf, to which he belonged, and banu-Sufian, from whom was descended Mu'awiyah, the founder of the first Islamic dynasty. Banu-Quraish held the monopoly of the wells, the markets, the caravan-routes, and the guardianship of the Mecca temple. Banu-abd-Manaf were the poorer of the clans, and Mohammed himself was a posthumous child, brought up by his grandfather. So uninfluential was he in the tribe that when he started preaching Islam he could find no one to listen to him except his wife, who believed in him from the first, his friend and successor abu-Bakr, and his young cousin Ali. For twelve years Mohammed preached Islam in Mecca, declaring the unity of God as a cardinal principle, condemning the barbaric practices of Quraish, such as the burying of infant girls, gambling and, above all, idolatry. The young pagans of Mecca stoned him and persecuted him, the poets lampooned him and changed his nick-name to "the madman." He claimed his tribal right of protection by demanding the patronage of a chief, but this was refused. At last his persecutors became so violent that he had to flee to Medina, where he found supporters among the Christians and Jews of that city. From Medina he led a series of campaigns against the hostile Meccan tribesmen which ended in their defeat and the eventual spread of Islam throughout Arabia. In A D. 632 he died and was buried in al-Haram ash-Sharif.

The Prophet left no will to indicate who should or should not succeed him. The first four Caliphs (successors) were elected by the tribes from his early supporters. The fourth Caliph was Ali, his cousin

and son-in-law. Ali's wife, Fatimah, was the only descendant of Mohammed who survived him. During the second Caliphate, that of Omar, Egypt was invaded by the Arabs, and after the fourth Caliphate Mu'awiyah, son of abi-Sifian, founded the first Islamic dynasty, virtually the Moslem Empire.

A few years after the death of Mohammed's first wife he married abu-Bakr's daughter, "Ayesha, the red-haired," as he called her, for she was his favourite. Soon after, he contracted several other marriages to strengthen his position among the clans in accordance with the traditions of the Bedouins which remain to this day.

These are the bare facts of the life of Mohammed which every Moslem knows. He is not associated in the minds of his followers with divine qualities or with miracles, or with a pattern of perfect conduct such as the pattern of Christ in the mind of the Christian. In point of fact certain of his acts, such as the marrying of so many wives, are forbidden to Moslems in the Koran itself.

The private life of Mohammed has been the subject of fanatical attacks by missionaries and good Christian historians for many a century. These were part of the general campaign of vilification of the Eastern peoples who were to be exploited by Europe. The viler the attacks, the more justified the self-righteous capitalist felt in making a good profit out of the poor peoples of the Prophet. It would seem insincere to defend the behaviour of a man who died more than thirteen hundred years ago. One's religious chivalry does not respond to, nor can one's moral sense grasp, such unreal knight-errantry. The Prophet Mohammed never claimed to be anything but human. Invariably his friends would ask him whether a certain action or saying was "inspired" or not, and unhesitatingly he would tell them. He was well aware of having a dual personality—as a prophet he acted only under divine inspiration, as a man he behaved according to the best tradition of his society.

Islam

Whatever criticism hostile theologians may have levelled against Mohammed and his religion, it leaves untouched the ethical code he advocated. Besides, religion and morality become of interest only in so far as they are lived by human beings. It is a poor defence of Christianity to say that it is so fine that only the few can live it. If the Europeans are Christian it would be ridiculous to suggest that the Jews or the Moslems or the Hindus or any other people, including the "worshippers of sticks and stones," are inferior to the Christians by virtue of their beliefs. If wickedness is measured by cruelty, by inflicting suffering and by destruction of life, then the good Christian theologians of Europe should look to the beam in their own eye before seeing so clearly the mote in their neighbours'.

Part of the Koran was revealed to the Prophet in Mecca, the rest in Medina. The ethical and judicial *surahs*, or texts, were inspired by definite occasions as answers to the social problems of the community. This is why the Koran is not a book in the modern western sense of the word. An explanation of the *surahs* requires knowledge of the occasions which inspired them and of the social setting of Mohammed's community. As literature, the Koran has so far defied all attempts at translation. It would, therefore, be very unfair to judge it by reading it in English, and free translation which might give it the dignity and the music which it undoubtedly possesses in Arabic is discouraged by Moslem theologians.

To explain Islam to readers would be going beyond the aims of this book. Moreover, practised religion differs from age to age. It would perhaps be best, in trying to give an idea of how the Egyptian Moslems

interpret their religion, to quote from the textbooks of the Egyptian schools to-day. The following are quotations from a government school-book of religious instruction based on Koranic texts : pages 17 and 32 of "al-Koran al-Karim wad-Din":—

" Those boys who believe in God and His Prophet, who know He is all-powerful in heaven and earth, who walk the straight path carrying out their religious obligations of fasting and prayer, of honesty and truth, shall know not fear, but shall have the blessing of God and His charity. Verily they shall inherit Paradise and all it contains for which man yearns . . .

" The best words are those in which one asks another to worship God and to do good for one's neighbour and for oneself . . .

" Meet transgression with forgiveness, nay with charity. If another boy insults you, walk away ; if he slanders you, speak kindly of him, for thus he will repent and will become a close friend to you instead of an enemy. If you insult or slander there will be more enmity and hate . . .

" To gain security, do useful work . . .

" The Prophet Mohammed, the blessings of God be upon him, was very kind to animals. Once he gave a thirsty cat his own drinking water and once he fed a hungry ewe, putting dates in her mouth with his own blessed hands. One of his friends once took an egg from a pigeon's nest ; the Prophet, God bless his soul, asked him to return it in kindness to the pigeon . . ."

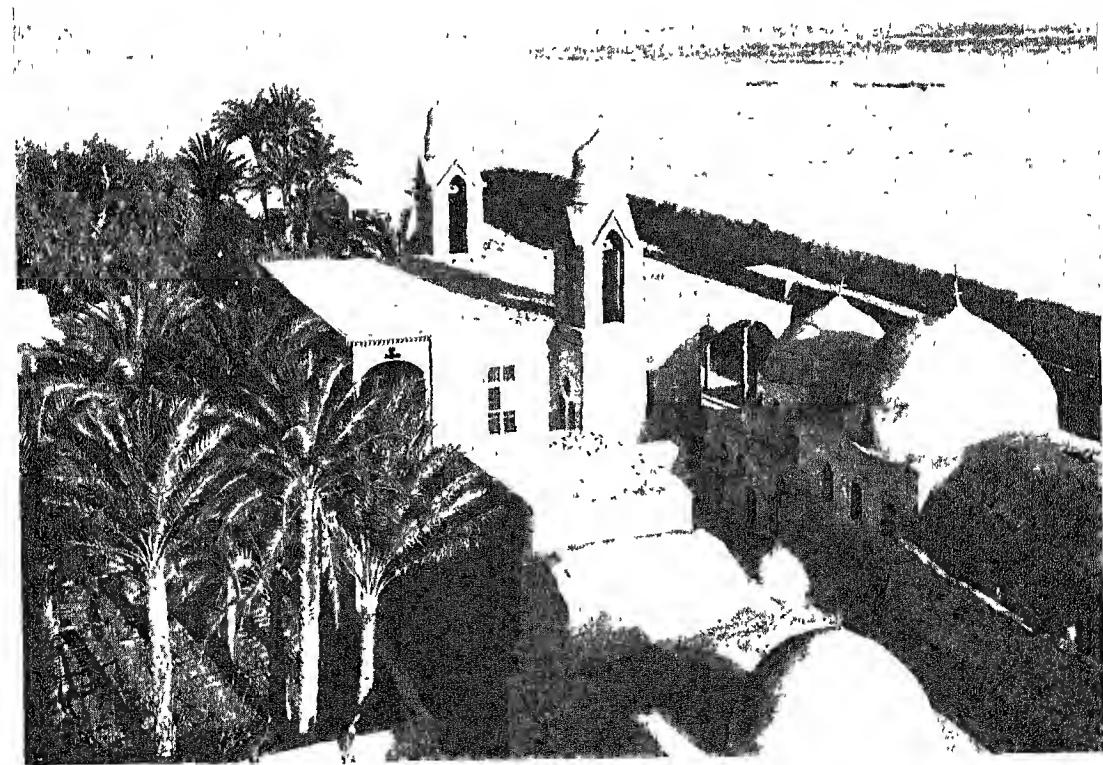
The foregoing account of Islam presents the orthodox belief of the majority of educated Moslems. The uneducated are more or less the same in any religion. They believe in miracles and saints and a great deal of superstition, whether they be Moslems, Christians or Buddhists.

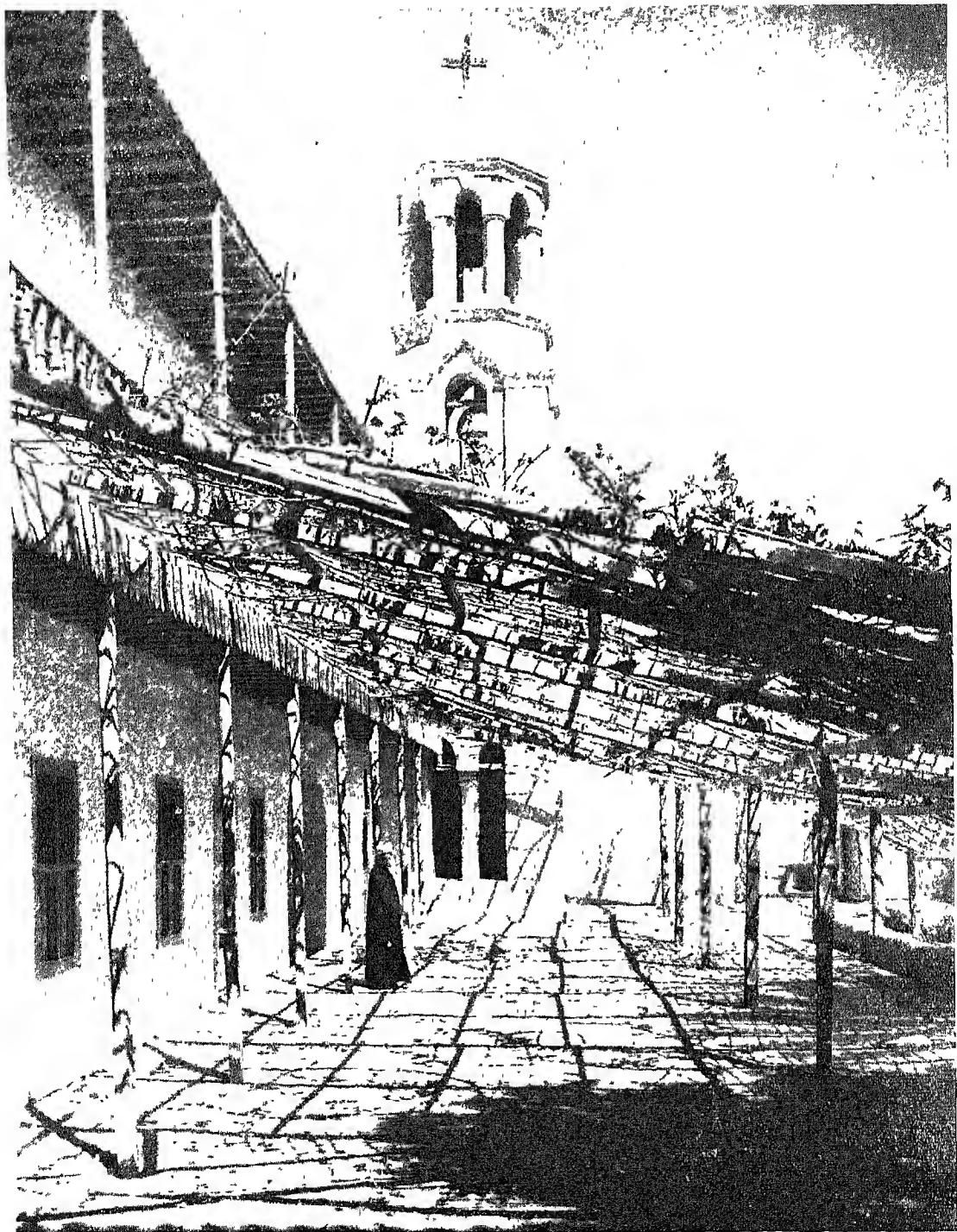
The Egyptian Moslems form nine tenths of the population. Their God is the creator of heaven and earth — The One who has no like. They know Him through His attributes of perfection, all-mercifulness, all-mightiness, and the rest of the anthropomorphic descriptions familiar to theologians. This confession of faith in God is linked with a declara-



Ptolemaic interest in astrology:
THE ZODIAC,
TEMPLE OF HATHOR

DEIR ES-SURIAN, WADI EN-NATRUN

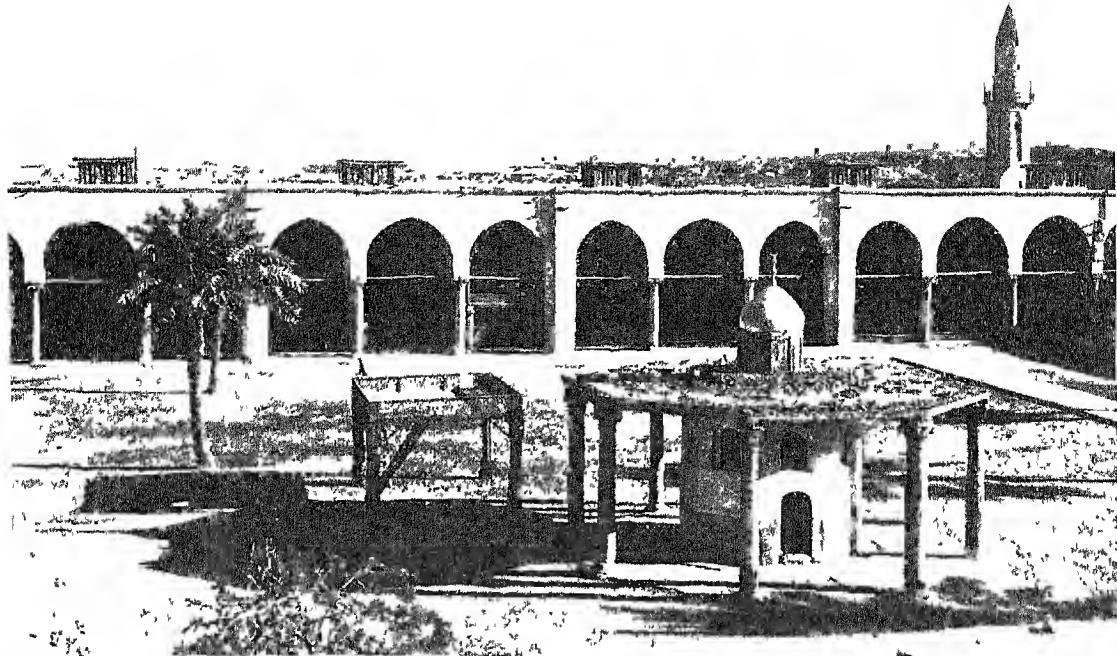




DEIR EL-BARAMOUS, WADI EN-NATRUN



DEIR EL-MARKARIUS, WADI EN-NATRUN: THE REFECTIONY



Early Islamic period
COURT OF THE MOSQUE OF AMR 'IBN EL 'AS, CAIRO



Fatimide period
KUFIC INSCRIPTION, MOSQUE OF EL-HAKIM, CAIRO

tion that Mohammed is His messenger—a prophet like so many before him, chosen to receive the divine message to spread among the peoples. It is the word of God which the prophets deliver faithfully to the nations ; but the nations, their kings and priests, corrupt the word of God, hence the necessity to send prophets throughout the ages to purify religion, to check this corruption of the Holy Books and reinstate the word of God. Examples of such prophets, according to the Koran, are Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, who is called the last of the prophets.

Ethically there is no radical difference between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Socially, dogmatically and legislatively there are differences. Against the trinity of Christianity there is the strict monotheism of Islam; against the monogamy of Christian society there is the polygamy of the Moslems , and against the few principles of behaviour in the New Testament there is the very detailed legislation for trading, inheritance and the social offences detailed in the Koran. Strictly speaking, the number of gods one worships or the number of marriages one contracts are statistical problems which should be outside the domain of religion, but since humanity has chosen to advance them as cardinal issues, it would be unwise to ignore their significance.

Against this simplicity of the Islamic religion there sprang up in Europe a host of false representations. They all rest on the quoting of Islamic superstitions and making them out to be its genuine practices, or on the principle of fabricating fantastic tales and fallacious arguments, ascribing them to Islam, then refuting them to the satisfaction of an audience. It is easy to make the religion one dislikes so utterly ridiculous that one's own religion sounds solid common sense by comparison. For instance, many Europeans think that Moslems believe that the Prophet travelled on a carpet, that he preached that women have no souls, that Moslems worship idols and that the Prophet Mohammed is divine. There is also the familiar story of his calling on the mountain to come to him and his supposed answer, " If the mountain will not come to Mohammed, Mohammed will go to the mountain." Sheer common sense,

of course, but Moslems have never heard of it. One would have passed by such cheap propaganda unperturbed, had it not been for the existence of equally cheap writing by first-class European scholars. One has only to look into the references to Islam and the Prophet in the work of such eminent authors as Margoliouth, Springer, Sale, and, last but not least, Dean Inge, to realise the indignation felt by Egyptian Moslems at coming across such falsehoods. In his essay, "Bernard Shaw as a Theologian," the Dean says, "If his (St. Paul's) enemies had succeeded in killing him, we might now be worshipping Mithras or Mohamet or Hitler's resuscitated god, Odin." Here, indeed, we have the metamorphosis of Dean Inge from a pillar of the church to the column of a newspaper; but there are others who reveal worse ignorance in their writing. The pity of it is that they do a lot of damage to the reputation of European scholarship.

In addition to the orthodox representation of Islam, there are various rationalistic interpretations by Moslem and Christian thinkers. As already indicated, it has been viewed as a reformation of the Christianity prevailing in Arabia before the appearance of Mohammed. Such an interpretation would not carry us far since it would still need an interpretation of Christianity. A tentative rendering based on the growth and power of class in Arabia in the 6th century A.D. would perhaps throw new light on the religions of the Middle East in relation to its economics. The last fifty years previous to the birth of Mohammed saw the beginning of class society in Hidjaz. In the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, kingdoms built on agriculture had appeared centuries before, but Hidjaz itself had no agriculture. In this respect its social development was probably unique among the nations who contributed to civilisation. Arabia grew from tribal shepherd communities into a class society which was basically one of trading.

In the opening part of this Survey it is explained how in agricultural civilisation, when a community of landowners splits up into classes, such as the artisans, priests and so on, the economic class interest crystallises into an ethos, the ethos takes one of the old ghosts of tribal society as its symbol. As the class grows in power, the ghost becomes a

god which eventually takes its rightful place in the people's pantheon. Hence a hierarchy is established in heaven with ranks and attributes corresponding to the classes of that community. In the case of Arabia the formation of class society corresponded with the appearance of monotheism. The ancient Arabic literature proved this since even before the advent of the Prophet Mohammed a man like Qiss-ibn-Sa'idata-al-Ayadi, who was neither Christian nor Jew, had advocated a monotheistic religion in a style of verse uncannily like that of the Koran. For two or three generations before the Mohammedan era the Hidjaz had had many rumours of the appearance of a prophet with a new religion. It was also during that time Quraish had become the dominant tribe of the Hidjaz; It had held the monopoly of the wells, the trade routes and the market places. The ancient idols, the Lat and the 'Uzza, had been crumbling with the break-up of their tribal society, for Quraish was transmuting the tribes into a nation with a ruling class of traders. Thus the god of Abraham, of the Israelites, the one god who had fought since the days of the Hyksos for the supremacy of the traders had his will at last.

The first rise of monotheism in the city states of Syria was hampered by the spread of the New Egyptian Empire. That empire lasted for a thousand years. But the trading communities of the Mediterranean could not be destroyed. Synchronising with the fall of the Egyptian Empire, they grew into strong classes, each in its respective country making a bid for power. In Greece, Athens rose to eminence through trade. The various wars which tore Greece into factions mark the struggle between agriculture and trade. The destruction of Athens had spelt the defeat of the Hellenic trader. All over the basin of the Mediterranean, in Italy, Greece, Syria and Egypt the trading class was usurping power from the landowners and building empires. This is the significance of Alexander's empires, of the rise of Rome, of the Ptolemies in Egypt and of the fall of Babylonia. In all the empires which followed the New Empire of Egypt until the rise of the Islamic Empire, the power of the ruling traders rested on a compromise with the landowning class or on usurping its power.

The bureaucrats, including the military, were generally the class which helped the traders to usurp power. When their old masters, the landowners, paid them badly for their services, they deserted them and went over to the traders. From the beginning, the Roman Empire was built on the compromise of three strong classes, the patricians, the plebeians and the military. This is the significance of the Triumvirate. It is probably the basis of the Trinity as a symbol of a class god.

A scrutiny of early Christian heresies reveals their monotheistic nature, the violently anti-Roman attitude of their exponents, and the fact that these were Semitic speaking peoples. If viewed rationally, the concept of the Trinity, which was championed by Rome, should be considered the ideological counterpart of Roman life. Politically, there was the Triumvirate; religiously, the triad Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus had formed the tutelary divinities of Rome. Quirinus was another name for Romulus, the semi-divine son of Mars, the old god of agriculture. One need not go to Indian or Pharaonic culture to explain the Trinity.

The monotheistic creeds of the Semite traders were the fitting ethos of their rising class and of their mental make-up. In every respect the merchants were superior to the landowners of the time. All round the Mediterranean, landowners had ceased to contribute to production. They had become a parasitic class living on the monopoly of land. Although they monopolised the wells, the markets and the trade routes, the Semite traders were no parasites. They were the guides of travellers and leaders of caravans, with knowledge of the stars and the lonely tracks of the desert, with the gift of doing better the things the tribesmen did well. They were men accustomed to hazards and to action. One has only to read how demoralised the Byzantines and Romans appeared to the Bedouin, and with what self-righteousness he usurped their power, to feel the effeteness of those landowners. The superiority of the traders and the organic unity of their class inclined to make them coercive, austere and 'inspired.' They felt justified in being **the** class, **the** leaders. Their everyday life had taught them the advantage of abstraction. A camel was worth a Persian carpet, or so much grain, or so many slaves. These

were all one to them. To the cultivator of land the sun, the crop and the soil could never be so abstracted. The sun was not the equivalent of the soil nor the soil of the crop. The sun was a vitalising power related to, yet not connected with, the soil; the soil gave birth to the crop. The lord of heaven, Jupiter, and Mars, the god of ploughing, and Romulus, his offspring, give a direct symbolism. The Trinity had no origin in Bethlehem.

The trader equated things, reduced them to their oneness. He was as individualistic as the captain of a ship because he was the leader of a caravan. Monotheism was a direct outcome of his daily experience and the mental habits of his class. The aggressiveness of monotheism was the coercive tendency of a minority class which everywhere outside Arabia had had to usurp power. In Arabia of the seventh century, it became for the first time a majority class, ruling in its own right. When the early Arab conquerors marched shouting the slogan, "There is no deity but God," they echoed the challenge of the traders to rule the world in place of the landowners. If the Koran reflects in its metaphors, similes and morality the language and the habits of merchants, it is only because the Koran symbolises the spirit of their class.

By so basing the religions of the Middle East on the formation of its classes, one sees the continuity of development in the cultures of ancient Egypt, Athens, Rome, Judea and Arabia. It is one long development, sometimes halting and spasmodic, sometimes surging and precipitous. Always it is the outcome of human blocs, clashing, exploiting nature, moulding their sentiments to suit their material aims.

The Arabs invaded Egypt during the second Caliphate, that of Omar, in A.D. 639-641. The Egyptians hailed them as deliverers and in a few years they settled down to rule. They wrote home glowing accounts of the crops, the fruit, the Nile and the 'brilliantly green valley'; 'a month long' they described Egypt, "and ten days wide." But at the time they wrote that they had not penetrated the whole length of Upper Egypt. As a trading class they had had enough experience with landowners to know that the monopoly of land carries within it the seeds of corruption,

so they forbade their class to buy land or to farm it. They felt that compromise with the landowners would end in their return to power, so they kept to their tents and concentrated on changing the people's religion. By setting right the "mathematical formula" of the deity, by training the people in their way of thinking, they thought they would keep them quiet. The early Arabs were simple livers, proud yet humble before their god, honest in their dealing. Their virtues remain to this day the ideals of a trading community. They are the virtues of Europe's Calvinists and Quakers, Unitarians and Methodists. Many an English traveller of modern times has noted the similarity between the character of the Arab chief and that of the suburban English business man. Industry has abstracted the Trinity into a monotheistic "three in one."

Long before the days of Mohammed the Arabs had rebuffed all the efforts of the Roman fleet to capture trade with India. They had exported wood from Abyssinia to build themselves agile ships capable of dealing efficiently with the Roman galleons. Within a decade or so of their invading Egypt, they imported cedar from the Lebanon to build a Mediterranean fleet as well. Only thus could they ensure the destruction of the Roman Empire. By denying themselves the ownership of land, by monopolising the wells, the markets and the trade routes by sea and land, the Arabs sought to keep themselves at the helm *ad infinitum*.

In common with previous periods, the Islamic had its characteristic landmarks. Until A.D. 660 there was the Republic—a short-lived glorious failure. The Hidjaz was to be the heart of Arab democracy, built on the dominance of the merchant princes. The Arabs thought that by preaching the brotherhood of man and the oneness of God, by isolating themselves from the land and by charging the conquered foreigners a moderate fee for acting as their protectors, they themselves would inherit the earth. But the contradiction within their class was against the realisation of this vain dream. The essential difference between the two clans of Quraish—that to which the Prophet belonged and that to which Mu'awiyah belonged—was racial. Like the Israelites, banu-Sufian were

exclusive and clannish, Mohammed's people were cosmopolitan and free of race hate. They acted in the inter-racial spirit of a class. This is obvious from the ethics of the Koran, which advocates the equal rights of all Moslems, irrespective of race. The old enmity between the two clans of Quraish soon culminated in tribal strife and bloodshed. Even had this not happened, the Utopian nature of a republic with a ruling class of knight-errants, cut off from the world by deserts, isolated in a maze of tents and monotheism, would soon have become obvious to the Hijaz. It must have been apparent to Mu'awiyah, when he betook himself to the green valleys of Syria. Later on, the same thing was apparent to Ali. Ali looked on in helpless indignation to see Mu'awiyah found the first Islamic dynasty on foreign but fertile soil.

In Egypt the period of the Republic coincided with the organisation of government, the joining of the Nile with the Red Sea by means of a canal to help commerce, the reduction and unification of taxes and freedom for the Coptic church with 'Islamic preferences' in the form of exemption from the personal tax for converts. The exemption proved so effective that in a short while the rate of conversion from Christianity to Islam embarrassed the rulers! Eventually they had to tax Moslems and Copts alike.

The Coptic Church had preserved the Semitic unitarian faith of early Christianity, or at least they adopted it in opposition to the Roman Trinity (which is never explicitly stated in the New Testament). What the Arabs had against Coptic dogma was the literal understanding of the Semitic metaphor of father and son, originally an agricultural metaphor. As it is understood to-day by an Anglican prelate it probably would have been sanctioned by Mohammed because it has become abstract and philosophised in accordance with modern idealism. In the theology of the medieval church, the relation of God the Father to God the Son would have been more living, more anthropomorphic. The Arabs insisted on the avoidance of the metaphor in explaining monotheism. With the destruction of the Roman Empire the church lost its national, revolutionary impetus. The monotheism of Islam was not altogether alien

to it, its economic advantages were an incentive to conversion. The Coptic language, which might have slowed down the acceptance of Islam, had been spurned by the Greek and Roman settlers. Coptic had remained too long at the level of a peasant dialect to be a bar to alien culture or a medium for Arabic thought. It could neither refute a superior intellectualism nor adapt itself to it. Within a century of the Arab invasion Islam became the religion of the majority of the people; within three, Arabic established itself as the national language.

In the church, only a part of the service was given in Coptic, a practice preserved until this day.

The Ommayiad period (A.D. 660-750) affects Egypt indirectly. The Ommayiads were insular in their outlook and culture. Their literature was mainly an extension of the pre-Islamic; their dynasty never learnt that the true spirit of a class overrides creed and race. They had a remnant of tribal tradition which inclined them to exploit the land-owners by means of taxes, when they should have created means for them to exchange their crops and thus share in the general prosperity. In short, the Ommayiads failed to reconcile mercantile and agricultural economy. Culturally, their period extends back to over half a century before the birth of Mohammed. Poetry, for example, held the same pattern that it had had in the pre-Islamic era, but an evolution in subject matter manifested itself in a change of theme. Pre-Islamic poetry had expressed clearly the restless spirit of the Bedouin class caught in the welter of class formation. The dominant sentiment was that of a people on the move, stirred to melancholy on leaving their homes. The famous pre-Islamic odes are poems of nostalgia, of wailing over ruins, but also of pride and faith in the destiny of the Arabs.

Then came the second phase, that of devoting verse almost exclusively to singing the praises of the rising class. Every warrior or vizier, every wali or emir, had a bard in his pay to glorify him in life and immortalise him after death. The poem had remained a compromise of two themes: an expression of the love affairs of the poet and the exaltation of his patron. The first part of the poem was tribal in theme, the

second was a class development. Gradually, the praise grew larger in proportion. In the days of the Abbassides, a poet like abu Nawas split the traditional verse form into two, exclusively amatory or exclusively eulogistic. The individual was praised for his courage, generosity, breeding, enterprise, above all for being a master.

The use of verse as a medium of eulogy, which outlasted the Ommayiad dynasty, was the crude attempt of an inexperienced class to blow its own trumpet. It had nothing except that one trumpet to use. Painting, music, sculpture, the tale, all class culture the early Arabs shunned, because that culture had belonged to the landed class with which the Arabs would have no compromise. The counterpart of self-aggrandisement is the command of obedience from the exploited class. The earliest class form of inculcating obedience is religion. Throughout its history, class culture has had these two main functions: (a) to glorify the ruling class and hide its real motives, (b) to propagate the habits of working in contentment, humbleness, self-abasement and fear of the rulers. Religious literature, piety and prayers were spread among the people in support of the new social order, but among the rulers there was drinking, licence and the breaking of all commandments. In Egypt, Arabic had hardly established itself long enough to produce native writers and thinkers on the new pattern.

Moslems and Christians alike, the Egyptians were becoming disillusioned with their new rulers, particularly when a high flood devastated their lands and made the payment of taxes a burden. The conflict between agricultural and mercantile economy manifested itself in an attempt by the Arabs to settle a number of clans in the Sharkia province. They used the land for grazing and traded in sheep and cattle. They did not mix with the Egyptians.

(3) The Abbassides (A.D. 750-870) mark the flowering of the renaissance of the eastern Mediterranean. They were the merchant princes not only of Arabia but of the whole Levant, from Persia to Syria, from Hidjaz to Anatolia. They claimed descent from the Prophet and acted in the inter-racial spirit of Islam. Arabs and Persians, Chinese and Turks, were all equal if they were of the merchant class.) Never did the

Jews enjoy such equality with the people among whom they lived, never were they more safely scattered, more equitably treated, than during the early Abbasside period. For a while they were the least-taxed people of the Empire.

The Abbassides made safe the roads for traders, had regular caravans to China and India, sent commercial emissaries abroad. They saw to it that the crops of the countries under their dominion were exchanged with profit for the merchandise of foreign lands to the advantage of big farmers and traders alike. The workers paid the bill for this prosperity, as will be explained later.

(The Abbassides made full use of the traders' culture of Athens, Rome, Persia and India. A great deal of the culture of Athens came to Europe later through the translations of the Abbassides. They made the Levant the warehouse of trade between East and West. They held the exclusive monopoly of the linen industry centred round Egypt, and the cotton industry centred round Kazroun. When the farmers of Egypt resented the Abbasside monopoly of their crop, the Abbassides transplanted the linen industry to Persia, and Kazroun became known in history as the Persian Damietta. When the prices of cotton in Persia and Transjordan became unfavourable, they transplanted cotton to North Africa. By the introduction of Indian and Chinese goods to the countries of the Middle East they created the right conditions for the advance of its industries later. By monopolising the trade between East and West they became the envy of all European traders. Hence the Crusades, which were to a great degree Europe's attempt to break the monopoly. Immediately before the Crusades, the Byzantine Empire had tried to reopen its trade-routes with Asia through Anatolia. The Rhone Valley merchandise of furs and silks, introduced by Syrian immigrants, was paralysed by the Abbassides whose fleet barred the way to these so-called sea-traders. These sea-traders carried the Rhone silk, the furs and the white slaves to sell in Asiatic markets, until the Abbassides discovered that they could import these commodities from Russia and China at a cheaper rate. Later, the position of the European market was further

aggravated by the manufacture of silk within the Abbasside Empire.

The glamour and splendour of the Abbassides caught the imagination of the Middle Ages. They were the dynasty which produced Mansour, Haroun-al-Rashid and Maamoun. Their capital, Baghdad, was the centre of the world's most extravagant luxury and culture. Thebes, Athens, Alexandria, Baghdad and Venice, these were the great cities of the merchant princes of the Eastern Mediterranean. Into Baghdad there came the Asiatic travellers of every race and creed with wondrous tales from China, India, Persia, Egypt and Sicily. By the tenth century the 'Arabian Nights' (their correct title is 'The Thousand and One Nights'), were the specific form of literature which the merchants' class made their own. They were the fruit of experience—as subtle a form of publicity as the novel of the Industrial Age has proved. In their diversity of character and race, of heroes and heroines, they truly reflect the cosmopolitan constitution of the Abbasside era. As tales of adventure in strange lands, of ingenious djinns leading young princes to treasures of pearls and diamonds, or of magic rings and boxes which hold the secrets of sensual paradise, the 'Arabian Nights' are the most authentic literature of a trading class of the pre-mechanical age. This is the secret of their success in Europe during the capitalist era; with modification and bowdlerizing, they became the perfect juvenile literature for bourgeois future empire-builders.

Under the early Abbassides, Egypt shared in the prosperity of the Moslem Empire. But its two monopolies of world trade—the manufacture of linen and of the papyrus scroll—were hard hit by the Abbasside traders, who introduced into the Mediterranean basin paper from Samarkand and cotton textiles from Persia. Paper and textiles brought down catastrophically the prices of Egyptian linen and papyrus. Merchants, farmers and government buyers alike vied with each other in lowering the cost of the production of the native goods, with tragic results to the workers of Northern Egypt. A description of the misery of the Egyptian weavers of the city of Tinnis, which together with Damietta was the centre of the linen industry, is here quoted. The Patriarch

Dionysius, after his visit to Egypt in A.D. 815, wrote, "I have never seen a people so poor. On asking them, they said . . . 'our wives spin the flax and we weave it all day long. The government buyers and the merchants give us half a dirhem* a day for wages. This is not enough to feed our dogs. We pay a tax of five dinars a year each. If we can't pay it, we are put in prison, and our wives and children are held as hostages. For every dinar we cannot pay, we are made slaves for two years."

No doubt the monopoly alone had made conditions of work cruel, but the competition of cotton textiles must have made them worse.

The fall of the Abbassides was caused by two factors : (a) competition within their class, which ended in the Turkish traders of the East and the Byzantine traders of the North ousting the Arabic elements and finally usurping power; (b) the havoc the introduction of Asiatic goods wrought in the industries of the Mediterranean.

The first factor was complicated. Not only did the Turkish and Mongol traders come in caravans and later in hordes to hold the highways of their trades, but they also rose from within the empire. In the eighth century, Baghdad was the centre of the world's slave trade. From the Rhone valley, Sicily, Greece, from the valley of the Volga and the Caucasus, from Abyssinia and the Sudan, from the ports of China and the islands of the Indian seas, the slave drivers herded hundreds of thousands of women and children to Baghdad to be allocated to the various countries of the empire. Together with the prisoners of war, they were sold to the rich and brought up in palaces. They had access to the best culture of the empire. Like the 'Mamelukes' of Pharaonic history, they soon freed themselves and became the professional class in the service of the Arab rulers. Since the main interest of trade lay in a line East and West of Baghdad rather than North and South, where there was nothing but desert, the Arab rulers had to be elbowed aside by the legitimate representatives of the majority of the leading class. When luxury corrupted them, the

* Less than two pence. One dinar was worth twenty dirhems.

Abbassides went the way of the Romans and became parasites on their class.

The picture should now be clear. In the history of the Middle East, the Hyksos conquest ushered in the rule of the trading class for the first time. They left their native desert to usurp the power of the neighbouring landowning classes. They established trade routes and developed mercantile economy, but owing to the prevalence of agricultural production, and perhaps to the backward state of ship-building, they were unable to maintain rule unaided.

From the eighteenth dynasty onward, there were two distinct lines of development in the Middle East. The one manifested itself in the economics of the Pharaonic Empire and later in the Persian, Greek and Roman Empires. The other showed itself in the Semitic kingdoms of Syria, in the Islamic Empire and later in the Turkish Empire. The first development was based on an agricultural, supplemented by a mercantile, economy. Its characteristic was the usurpation of power by the traders whenever they had the chance, and their subsequent overthrow. Its culture was polytheistic, animistic and never free of tribal elements. The second development was based mainly on a mercantile economy of the shepherd tribes of the Levant and the Arab peninsula. The characteristics of the culture of that development were monotheism, abstractness and formalism.

To this culture belong the three main religions of the Western world—Judaism, Christianity and Islam; but, on being taken over by Europe, Christianity became the creed of the Roman Empire and was made the symbol of the compromise of landowners, traders and the professions generally. It further adapted itself to the animistic culture of Europe and later to its industrial development. The Hebrew religion never made that compromise; its uncompromising spirit is clear from the records of the Old Testament and from the history of the Levantine kingdoms from the Nineteenth Dynasty onward. It remained, all through, the purest form of a traders' mode of thinking and culture. This is probably why the Jews have met, all through their history, with persecution whenever

they settled long enough in the midst of landowners. As for Islam, Arabia was the best situated country to nurse the traders' class in protection of the agriculturists. When the class grew strong enough in tribes which were predominantly traders, it left its nursery, Arabia, well equipped to usurp power from the degenerate landowning classes of the Mediterranean. In the knight-errant spirit of their peninsula, but also at a fixed price, they squatted on the world's trade highways to protect the traders. Having lined their purses, they acquired the vices of the lords and masters and went the way of the Romans. Thus the Mamelukes, and after them, the hordes of Asia, swept the Arabs off the trade highways to guard their own caravans. This is the explanation of the rise of the Turks, which will be dealt with in Part Three.

In Egypt, the Fatimide dynasty (A.D. 970-1160) came as the logical outcome of the events in Syria just described. It was the scourge of frustration which gave the Fatimides a chance to rise in Africa. The papyrus trade had been liquidated for ever in Egypt; the linen workers had suffered untold misery through the Abbasside monopolies; the products of North Africa had fallen between the two stools of Spain and Syria. Trade frustration and the violent disruption of industry are the bases of Fatimide philosophy, and there was no better country than Egypt to espouse their cause. Those who realise that the fount of Blake's mysticism and the mainspring of his poetry was the class frustration of the English craftsmen of his time, and not the book of Isaiah or the Revelation of St. John, will comprehend how unreal has been the interpretation of Fatimide history by Arab or European historians. We are told of Shi'ite feuds and Ismailite intrigues, of Indian re-incarnation and Magian asceticism as an explanation of Fatimide thought. Frustration has always required a line on which to air its escapist raiment. Fatimide philosophy, art and literature illustrate the truth of this. In common with the Ismailites, (the Fatimides represented the class one would call to-day the petit-bourgeoisie—the small shopkeepers who dealt in the products of tool-aided industry and the master-craftsmen who employed their apprentices. The Fatimides were the representatives of that class

wherever it was to be found within the Moslem Empire. Some of the caliphs were traders themselves ; one of them owned more than half the shops of Cairo. Fatimide historians boasted that during their reign the shops of Cairo were left open day and night without the risk of robbery. If at all, this must have happened later, in the days of their prosperity ; if further proof be needed of the petit-bourgeois nature of the Fatimides, one has only to glance at the surnames of the writers and thinkers who supported them. Most of these names were derived from crafts and trades, for example, an-Nahhas (the brass-worker), as-Sahhah (the proof-reader), az-Zadjadji (the glazier), al-Hallag (the spinner), an-Nassag (the weaver), ibn-ul-Djazzar (the son of the butcher). Because of the disarrangement of trade and industry within the Islamic Empire, the master craftsmen and small shopkeepers suffered greatly. In common with the peasants and workers they were visited with the plague and famine rife at the time. Plagues do not limit themselves to the poor ; they destroy the rich as well. This is the tragedy of exploiting men. A class discovers that it is easier to appropriate labour than to exploit the potential power in nature. It requisitions the good things of life and thus isolates itself from its community. It takes of the fruit of the labour of others, at the expense of their health. It is a subconscious process concealed by social laws. Soon comes the climax, when the working masses become exhausted and exposed to disease through undernourishment. As they are destroyed by famine they strike back with plague. Thus in their quest for pleasure, the exploiters destroy themselves.

The petit-bourgeoisie formed themselves into a secret society. They usurped power in North Africa where the influence of the big traders was weakest, and moved to Egypt where their class was strongest. Until this day the Ismaili sect represents on the whole the small shopkeeper. Another revealing feature of the class nature of the Fatimides is that the dynasty founder, Ubaid-Ullah, was reputed to be a Jew; ibn-Killis, the man most responsible for the economic planning and prosperity of Egypt under their rule, was a Jew converted to Islam ; and finally the dynasty's bureaucracy was substantially Jewish. The

Fatimides opposed large traders and landowners alike. They discouraged monopoly, the international slave trade, the polygamy of the Abbassides and many of their class laws. They forbade the entailment of land to break up the land monopoly ; in their days the Wakf land diminished in size to an extent which made the revenue insufficient for the upkeep of the mosques.

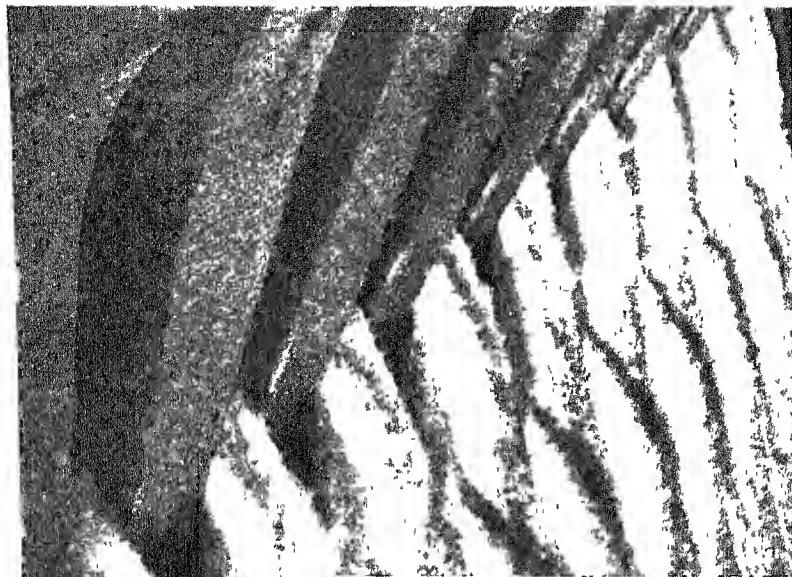
That the petit-bourgeoisie were frustrated is indicated in the symbolism of the names of their rulers (for instance, 'the ruler in the name of God,' 'the defender of the religion of God,' 'the one guided by God'); in the mystic nature of the neo-platonic philosophy of Thi-n-Noun and ibn-Maimoun, in the fantastic ideas they had of visible and invisible leaders and in the revival of astronomy which was never surpassed before or since within the Islamic Empire. El-Hakim's observatory on the Mokkattam Hills was famous throughout the East and ibn-Yunis still remains the greatest Egyptian astronomer.

Nevertheless, with the decay of the Abbassides, Egypt was left free to trade with Sicily, Spain and North Africa. More important than the trade was the improvement of native craftsmanship as a result of the importation of goods from Asia. (The Fatimide period, short as it was, should be considered the industrial renaissance of Islam. In linen and silk textiles, in metal work, in gold and silver workmanship, in wood and stone carving, cut-glass, ceramics, bookbinding and architecture Fatimide Egypt excelled other countries. But Egypt was too far from Europe to influence it greatly and it was in Fatimide Sicily that a civilisation arose which was later to affect Norman culture and even that of Frederick II.)

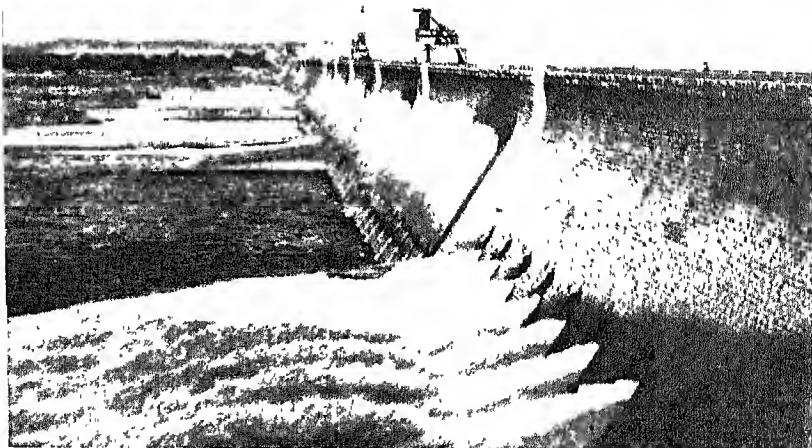
In dealing with class development one has to be wary of claiming this or that celebrity for one country or another, for it is class rather than the nation which matters. Al-Khowarizmi, a Shi'ite, was the father of the science of Algebra. The great physician, ibn-Ali al-Mousili, wrote his famous treatise "Select Material for the Eye," which became the standard work on ophthalmology in the Middle Ages. In it he describes an operation by suction which he invented for cataract. The greatest of all Arab physicists, Ibn ul-Haytham, the father of the science of optics,



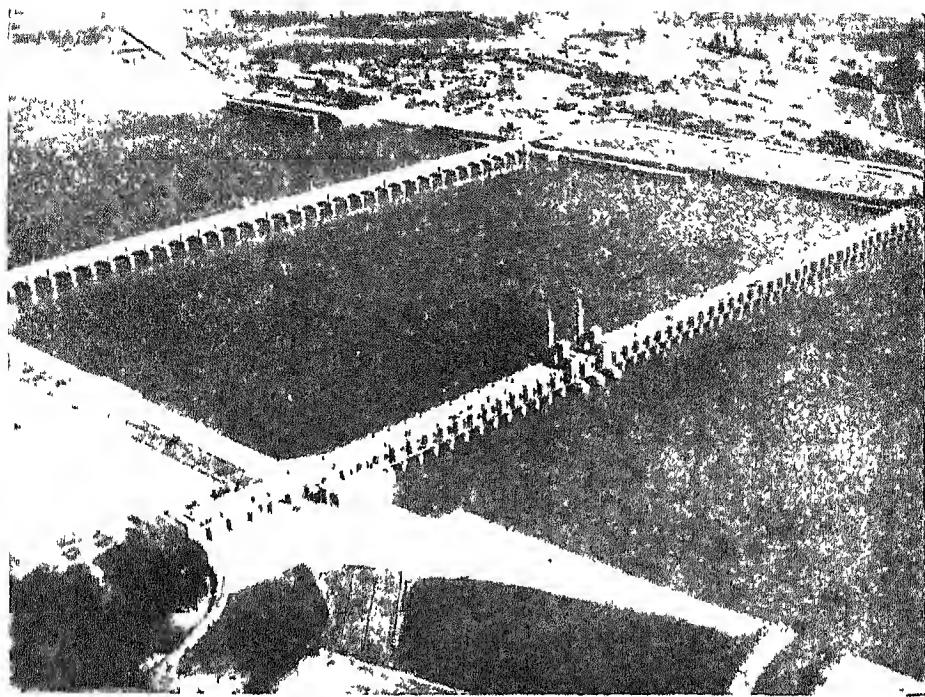
Tulinide period:
MINARET OF THE MOSQUE OF IBN-TULUN, CAIRO



IRRIGATION



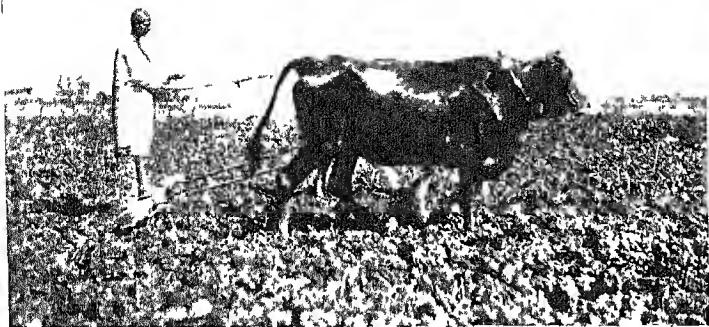
ASWAN
DAM



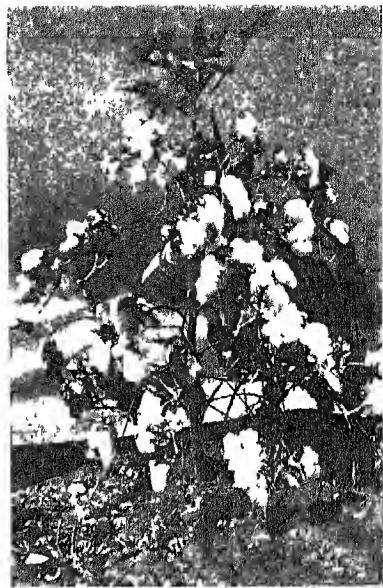
THE NILE BARRAGE, NEAR CAIRO



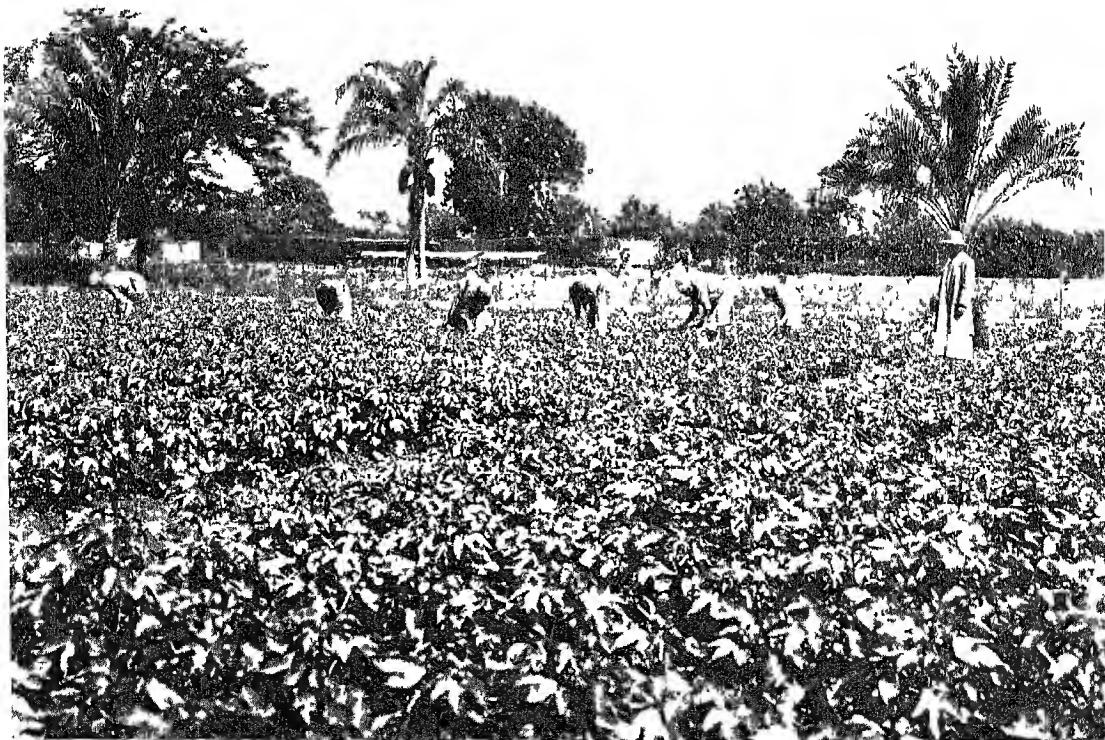
A TYPICAL IRRIGATION CANAL



LEVELLING A COTTON FIELD



THE COTTON PLANT



A COTTON PLANTATION

spent his maturer years in Egypt. It was this scientist with the culture and skill of a Leonardo da Vinci who first thought of an Aswan dam to make possible summer crops. His book, 'Kitab al-Manazir,' was published in Latin in A.D. 1572, and had a profound effect on Bacon, da Vinci and Kepler. A development in optics implies a high standard in glass manufacture, and the palaces of the caliphs of Fatimides and Abbassides alike were famous for their unique collections of crystal and cut glass.

By the middle of the twelfth century, the Asiatic traders held sway over most of the dominions of the Abbassides. On the North-Eastern borders, they were in conflict with their direct enemies, the traders of the Byzantine Empire. In the meantime, the Crusaders were on the march. Egypt, the citadel of the petit-bourgeoisie, was hemmed in on all sides by the big traders of Europe and Asia. Under their banners bearing the sign of the Cross and the sacred verses of the Koran, they fought their battle for the possession of the gateway of world trade. Like the Abbassides before them, the Fatimides were brushed aside, for the representatives of the petit-bourgeoisie had also gone the way of the Romans.

(The early Arab conquerors have left very few monuments in the Egypt of to-day. The most important of these are the mosque of Amr and the ruins of the early Arab capital, ~~al-Fustat~~, (Old Cairo). The ibn-Tulun Mosque is probably the oldest in Cairo proper and the Nilometer at Roda Island is perhaps the only Abbasside monument left in Egypt. But Cairo is full of Fatimide monuments. The city itself was built in A.D. 969 by their general, Gawhar. The Azhar University and the three main gates of Cairo—Bab Zuweila, Bab en-Nassr and Bab el-Futuh are but a few of the very interesting monuments of Fatimide architecture. The Fatimides were great builders of mosques, bazaars and shops. The characteristics of their style are the boldness and spaciousness of design, the stalactite niche and minaret and the beautiful Kufic inscriptions in stone.)

Between A.D. 1170 and A.D. 1517, Egypt was ruled by the Asiatic traders who formed the Ayyubide dynasty and the Mameluke princes.

Yusuf Salah ed-Din (Saladin) is the most famous ruler of Egypt during these three and a half centuries which were mainly occupied by the Crusades. The fight between European and Asiatic traders had now become direct, extending over the whole Mediterranean basin.) The characteristic features of this period were all exhibited in a clearer form in the rise of the Turkish Empire. They will be dealt with in Part Three of this Survey together with an estimation of the Mamelukes' culture. It is perhaps worth while to note here, before entering into the details of the culture of modern Egypt, that most of the mosques which the visitors see to-day in the country belong to this period. Culturally, and from a racial point of view, the Mamelukes have a direct bearing on modern Egypt. But this will be better understood after surveying the present state of culture. Suffice it to say that many of the Mameluke families still remain in Egypt. Until quite recently they played an important role in the politics of the country.

Modern Egypt

The length of the Nile from Wadi Halfa on the southern borders of Egypt to the Barrage where the two branches of the Delta fork is just under 800 miles. The Damietta branch is about 150 miles and the total length of the Nile in Egypt is approximately 1,000 miles, out of 3,473 miles which constitute the length of the whole river.

The total length of canals for irrigation in Egypt made by man is about 9,500 miles; the drainage canals are over 5,000 miles in length; escape heads, regulators and aqueducts account for nearly another 2,000. Since the great majority of these have been made in the last century, it follows that the total length of waterways made by the modern Egyptians is more than 15 times the length of the Nile in Egypt. To realise the stupendous effort made by the peasants to dig these canals and to keep them free

from silt one may add that the width of some is 6 yards and of the majority 20 yards.

Irrigation depends on four sources of water: the Nile, canals, artesian wells, and rain. Rain accounts but for a few thousand acres of cultivated desert, mainly on the north-western coast; artesian wells are made use of in fields that are at some distance from the river, but they are also the main source of water in the oases of Egypt. Direct irrigation from the Nile, by lifting the water on to the fields, accounts for the watering of a few thousand acres. Of the 1,100 miles which make the length of the Nile banks, about 250 miles are occupied by cities, roads or villages. The rest is either *Haram-en Nil** or it is too high to make the lifting of the water from the Nile by manual labour possible.

Direct irrigation from the Nile is the basic principle of basin irrigation and accounts for the watering of over a million and a quarter acres, mostly in Upper Egypt. The total cultivated acreage is over five and a half millions. It follows that most of the land (about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million acres) is irrigated by canals. Basin irrigation is the regulated flooding of the fields just as Pharaonic irrigation was the uncontrolled submerging of land caused by the annual Nile flood. Until just over a century ago, the *fallahin* had to wait for the flood water to subside before they could sow their seeds. They produced only autumn and winter crops—never summer. The fields that could be utilised in the summer were limited to such narrow strips of bank as could be watered by *shadoufs* and *sakias*. Such land was generally suitable for growing vegetables for the daily necessities of the people.

Canal irrigation is known as perennial irrigation. It is the direct result of dams, aqueducts and drainage. Draining canals which are mostly open are the counterpart of the irrigation canals. If you soak a field with water you have to drain the water out later otherwise the land will become salt-logged. Perennial irrigation is the industrial revolution extending itself outside Europe for the benefit of European capitalists. By far the

* Or the "Forbidden land" of the Nile. A strip of bank varying between 2 and 5 yards in width, which is theoretically public property

majority of the land of Egypt to-day is cultivated in a manner far removed from the Pharaonic. It produces different crops, such as cotton and sugarcane ; it grows different trees and flowers, such as bougainvillea, jacaranda, the mango, poinsettia, zinnia and amaryllis ; and it has a different landscape. The papyrus, which is a product of swamps, is almost extinct. Flax, once the main crop of Egypt, died out for centuries and was re-introduced quite recently, and certain varieties of palm trees characteristic of ancient Egypt are now very rare. Dams and barrages do not allow of crocodiles and hippopotami, and the density of the population has driven the jackals and foxes into the desert. Before perennial irrigation, the Nile in flood must have looked from the air a gigantic swamp, hundreds of miles long and scores of miles wide in places. European writers are fond of showing resemblances between the modern Egyptian countryside, modern ways of tilling, and the Pharaonic methods of agriculture. They think that the present day *fallahin* live more or less as their ancestors did thousands of years before Christ. European writers love romancing.

The typical crop of the perennial irrigation era is cotton, and thereby hangs a tale. Nothing has been more tragic in the life of modern Egypt than the introduction of cotton. To introduce a crop is a progressive measure ; but according to the best authorities cotton was encouraged to become the major crop of the country by Great Britain because of her fear of the American monopoly of cotton. The utter disregard of life and health which accompanied the introduction of cotton is beyond description. It has enriched the Lancashire mill owners and the Levantine middle-man, but it also helped to create land-monopolies in Egypt, and it has exposed the Egyptian peasant to the havoc of disease and under-nourishment. Instead of producing food for the people, the land was exploited to produce cotton ; the great bulk of which was exchanged for luxury goods from Europe, and a small percentage was carted thousands of miles away to be woven and re-imported at twenty times its original price. From thousands of miles away, food was carried on ships to Egypt to feed a country which is predominantly agricultural.

To realise what perennial irrigation did to the peasants, one has only to read the proceedings of the Second Agricultural Conference held in Cairo, 1945. Professor Hifnawy, then Technical Advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture, said in his report, "Half the inhabitants of Egypt suffer from ankylostomiasis, the symptoms of which are mental and physical inertia." Professor Dr. abd el-Khalik estimated that the labour output of an Egyptian peasant suffering from this disease is 33% less than the average. Further there are ten million Egyptians suffering from Bilharziasis, which saps the mental and physical energy of the patient even more ruthlessly than the first disease. These two scourges are almost unknown in the region where basin irrigation is practised. As soon as perennial irrigation is introduced the two diseases spread, attacking from 75% to 95% of the inhabitants. The following figures quoted from Professor abd el-Khalik give the result of his experiments in the provinces of Kina and Aswan :

	Sigaia Region	Kala Region	Binian Region
Percentage of the two diseases when basin irrigation was practised	0%	7%	2%
Percentage of the two diseases three years after the introduction of perennial irrigation ...	43%	50%	75%

Professor Hifnawy goes on to explain how these diseases have also affected the mental and moral qualities of the peasants ; and how malaria, too, has spread as a direct result of the rise of subterranean water due to perennial irrigation. Open drainage has been responsible for most of the country's plagues and endemic diseases, and open drainage was the outcome of the profit motive behind the cultivation of cotton. The cheapest way of producing cotton was considered the best. It is a sad, long story which has not stopped with the disease and poverty it has brought to millions of human beings in the last hundred years, but also includes the diseases of plants and animals which perennial irrigation has introduced into Egypt. Let those who have read Cromer and Lloyd on the prosperity Imperialist rule has conferred on the country, forget for a while the interest of the class they serve and meditate on the price in suffering and loss of life which was paid by the Egyptian peasantry.

Even the blessings of science and machinery, of medicine and humanitarianism seem a mockery beside the evils which have accompanied foreign rule. And the blessings themselves seem to have been deliberately withheld from Egypt as soon as foreign rule became direct. Imperialist spokesmen are never tired of telling Egypt and the world at large of the benefits accruing from their benevolent rule. One would think that having turned the country into a cotton farm they would have run it intelligently—that being enlightened business men and having used the peasantry in a cruelly extravagant manner, they would have trained their “native bailiffs” in the modern ways of science. Statistics do not support the common belief that the imperialist power encouraged education. Most of the schools of applied science and industry were closed after 1882, and the following tables* give the lie to any assumption of beneficent rule —

Period		Technical and Practical Studies (1)	Humanities (2)	Total	Number of Students in each Country.
MOHAMED ALI 1813-1848	327	{ Medicine 15 Ind. & Eng. 310 Agriculture 2	12	339	France 230 England 95 Other Countries 14
UP TO BRITISH OCCUPATION 1849-1882	270	{ Medicine 121 Ind. & Eng. 149 Agriculture —	9	279	France 176 England 9 Other Countries 94
UP TO EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION 1883-1919	74	{ Medicine 25 Ind. & Eng. 45 Agriculture 4	215	289	England 231 France 57 Other Countries 1
UP TO ANGLO- EGYPTIAN TREATY 1920-1936	990	{ Medicine 272 Ind. & Eng. 619 Agriculture 99	460	1450	England 1,000 France 229 Other Countries 221

It should be clear from these statistics that in the early stages of European influence, Egypt was able to take advantage of the competition between Britain and France to send students to Europe for technical, practical, and scientific training, for these are in the ratio of 30 to 1 studying humanities. During the period of direct foreign rule (1882-1919), the ratio became 1 practical to 3 humanities. Moreover, in spite of the increase in the population there was a startling drop in the number

* Statistics based on the official records of the Missions Control, Egyptian Ministry of Education.

of students sent abroad from 597 to 75. This is not surprising in a country which at one time was paying over 30% of its national income as interest to foreign debtors.

Since 1919, the Egyptians have had an increasing control of their internal affairs ; but the foreign imperialist power did not relax its grip until it was sure that the native setting was moulded on a pattern in harmony with its own. To put it bluntly, Great Britain's policy, from 1882 onwards, was to create first a petit-bourgeoisie, then the bourgeoisie proper. This it did by encouraging the farmer owning 1·5 feddans and by building a system of bureaucracy with an extravagant clerical section on an average salary of £70 per annum. Although it is common knowledge that a system of land cultivation, based on allotments of 3·4 feddans, hampers agricultural production and organisation by tending to split the allotment too greatly, Cromer made his reputation for sound agricultural policy on establishing this system.

Having given it the impetus, the imperialist power left the ball to roll. There is little doubt that since 1919 the middle class in Egypt has been growing in influence and power. The development in education since then has been markedly quicker in the higher branches of knowledge and slow in compulsory education, which caters essentially for the peasants. On the other hand, primary education which meets the requirements of the children of the middle classes has been made free.

This is the heritage left by Great Britain to the modern Egyptian leaders of thought and to the people to solve for themselves. A condemnation by Europeans of modern Egypt is obviously an indictment of the rule of Great Britain. Modern Egyptians know that very well and resent with bitterness the irrational attacks of English politicians and pressmen on their country. They resent the insolence of imperial rule because they have come to see that its culture is an imposition and its refinement false.

Only a callous concentration on the romantic aspects of commerce can blind a thinker to the tragic failure of Imperialism.

An analysis of the social, cultural, and economic structure of the

Egyptian nation to-day reveals that the process of westernisation has reached a limit when it is no longer valid to speak of Egypt as an Eastern country. If Professor Trevelyan is right in saying "The social scene grows out of economic conditions, to much the same extent that political events in their turn grow out of social conditions," then it is no longer valid to base the differentiation of national development on locality, religion, race or language. All such differentiation is generally made on an unscientific basis, and most of it is prompted by the viewer's concentration on the archaic culture of a people or their outdated means of production. The same analyses show that it is no longer possible for Egypt to solve her own problems in isolation of the world, and it is no longer possible for her to draw on any phase of her ancient history as a means of rejuvenating herself with the hope of striking a new path to a development radically different from that of Europe. A national stamp and character are unquestionably desirable but must develop from her new Western economics in the same manner that European nations had to evolve their national characteristics from their common economics.

MODERN CULTURE

The following is a summary of the dominant influences in present cultural activities in their broadest sense.

Language

(a) **School Arabic**: Basically classical in construction, but strongly influenced by Western syntax and idiom through translation mainly from French and English. Investigation by the author has proved that the modern syntax of Arabic is nearer to the syntax of the above-mentioned languages than it is to that of the ancient classical language.

This is particularly the case in school text books and in newspaper literature: notably in journalese, the short story and controversial writing.

In vocabulary, scientific and industrial, thousands of loan words from the European languages have already established themselves in spite of the resistance shown to non-Arabic words by the Arabic Academy. No less than 70% of the active vocabulary has acquired meanings which no Arab of the Prophet's days would ever have associated with them.

School Arabic is more extravagant in its use of syllables and flowery expressions than is the spoken language. It has more clichés, stock phrases, synonyms and antonyms on which writers depend for effect. Its so called precision is grammatical and syntactical rather than logical and the source of its colourfulness is the imitation of ancient writers. Most of its eminent writers become so drunk with style and so fascinated by the subtleties expressing relations between words that they are led away from what they want to say to concentrate on giving their sentence grammatical nicety and stylised sense. Its failure is as much due to the weakness of its speech habits, its class exclusiveness and its isolation from European languages by virtue of its script, as it is to formalism, archaism and non-conformity to modern ways of thinking.

Finally, it is not historically true to say that modern school Arabic has a continuity with the past. One has only to read the books and documents of a period as recent as that of Mohammed Ali to find that there is no evidence of continuity.

(b) **The Spoken Language:** In its rich variety, it is derived from the dialects of the early Arab settlers. It still has traces of Coptic idiom and vocabulary in rural Egypt, and one or two Turkish suffixes and idioms in the language of townspeople. Colloquial is receiving a greater influx of European words than school Arabic, due to the direct contact between Western workers and traders and the Egyptians with whom they deal, but in rural districts the influx is limited.

It is a common fallacy to assume that school Arabic, even when pure or grammatical, is pronounced to-day as it was pronounced when

the Koran appeared. Such an assumption presupposes a degree of precision in speech-habits which is not possessed by man. On the other hand, the change in pronunciation does not make the speech-habits of the modern Egyptian less Arabic, because foreign speech-habits do not affect native speech-habits, except in very rare instances. No amount of Western influence could make any difference to the Arabic speech-habit of the Egyptians.

Literature

(a) **School Arabic** : Literature in this medium constitutes the bulk of literary production. It varies from the slavish imitations of an essayist like H. ez-Zayyat who copies the Abbasside writers, to the sonorous, classically disciplined Arabic of Dr. Taha Hussein, to the breezy, whimsical, semi-colloquial manner of Fikry Abaza, who alone has succeeded in creating a style which is genuinely national. Most of the forms of modern literature are taken over from the West. The most acclimatised of these forms is the short story ; the highest in standard is the essay.

Poetry retains the old Arabic classical metres, but not the same system of stress. In subject matter it is divided between the love and nature themes of European romanticism and the eulogistic or obituous motif characteristic of the old Arabic poetry. In imagery, however, it is strongly Western.

(b) **The Spoken Language** : The tale, the anecdote, and the proverb still retain their oral tradition, particularly in rural districts. But there are signs of deterioration in the Arabian Nights Tales which, until quite recently, were the main entertainment of town children. With the decrease of illiteracy, schoolboys are taking to the reading of cheap detective-story translations and cheaper French romances.

Colloquial Arabic has proved the best medium for the stage, for humour which has always been colloquial, for the superb poetry of Bayram it-Tunsy and for successful short story writing. Here, again, Western influence is dominant.

Music

(a) **Eastern** : Basically Turkish with Persian and Arabic influence. The recitation of the Koran, the *mawlid* or religious chanting, the *nai* and *mizmar* and the music of the Coptic Church, are probably the most Egyptian of all music. Western music, particularly in its popular varieties, has lately become a strong influence on the instrumental and vocal music of the cities. A great number of Western instruments, e.g., piano, kettle-drum, flute, trumpet, clarinet, violin and viola are all recognised instruments in Egyptian bands and orchestras.

(b) **Western** : In its classical variety it is restricted to the hotels and cafés which cater for the tourists and to a limited number of Egyptians and Europeans of the professional classes. In its popular forms it is rife in the dance halls and other haunts of entertainment owned by Levantines and catering for the city middle class. There are very few Egyptian composers in western forms and few institutions properly staffed to teach advanced musical theory. There are some conservatories for instrumental training. The government schools now include in their curricula a simple course of instruction in notation, scales, harmony and a description of forms.*

The Cinema

(a) **Western Films** : In the towns the cinema is the most popular form of entertainment and American films have the strongest influence. As everywhere else, giant musicals and the gangster film have a detri-

* See author's pamphlet, "MUSIC EASTERN AND WESTERN."

mental effect on taste and culture. Owing to its free market, Egypt receives a larger variety of foreign films than most other countries. Films popular in America and Europe are equally popular in Egypt.

(b) **Arabic Films** : Date back to the 'twenties, but it was the second world war which gave them the chance to develop without competition. The film industry in Egypt is the strongest and best organised in the East. It holds almost a monopoly in the Arabic speaking countries and is beginning to attract the attention of Hollywood financiers. In theme and technique the films are mostly slavish imitations of American productions. The climate, which should give the industry a favourable position, and the technique an individuality of its own, has not yet been taken full advantage of by cameramen owing to commercial and hasty development. The indoor photography is dull, to say the least. The most popular films are those with Egyptian singers who now command Hollywood salaries. The weakest point in production is script-writing ; but on the whole Arabic films have proved themselves obstinate rivals of Western ones ; there is little doubt that they have come to stay. In common with their Western prototypes they make very subtle class propaganda. Documentary and educational films are used by the Ministry of Education in the schools, and by various governmental departments, on a limited scale, to teach the peasants hygiene.

Radio

Broadcasting has lately been nationalised and is run on more or less a B.B.C. pattern. All radio sets are imported.

(a) **Arabic Programmes** : Koran recital, the Friday prayer and preaching, are but the counterpart of religious teaching and sermons in the English programme and most of the features, even the morning exercises and the children's hour are modelled on the programmes of the

“Radio Times.” The most popular forms of radio entertainment are music, particularly singing, and plays. The radio is the strongest Western influence now existing in Egypt, for it extends beyond the cities into the countryside and a battery-set in a village provides cheap entertainment to thousands. One direct result of the accessibility to rural districts of the Franco-Arab music and plays of the city dwellers is the replacement of the people’s folk songs by a medley of mushroom tunes ; another is the replacement of the people’s tales and anecdotes by the cloying sentimentalities of the Cairo salons. Lack of careful programme planning and the illiteracy of the peasants make it difficult for the State to take full advantage of this medium in publicising hygiene and agricultural instruction. But the Ministry of Public Health has vans, well-equipped with receiving sets and microphones, which are made good use of during epidemics and high floods. Finally, the radio has proved an effective influence in improving the literary forms of modern Arabic. Some of the artificial redundancy peculiar to the habits of writing the language seem to be dying out.

(b) **European Programmes** : The various Egyptian stations devote a limited number of hours to European programmes in French and English. These are for the European residents and include news, and relays or imitations of B.B.C. features. If anything these programmes are harmful to the settlers, since they strengthen the already strong iron curtain which isolates them from their environment.

The Theatre

(a) **Drama in School Arabic** : Most of the plays are either translations or adaptations from European drama ; a few with Eastern themes are original works modelled on Western patterns. Comedy is the least successful of forms in this medium and depends on over-acting and comic gestures to make up for the living quality of dialogue. Tragedy tends to

be melodramatic. The plays of Egyptian authorship draw on Arabic, and sometimes Pharaonic, themes and exploit the serious atmosphere of tradition. Those which deal with contemporary life find themselves compelled to compromise with the spoken language by adopting a semi-colloquial style. Verse drama which was started by the late poet Shawky seems to have come to a dead end in "Qais wa Lubna" of Aziz Abaza. For a number of years Tawfik el-Hakim wrote plays of various lengths which were obviously intended to be read rather than acted. The merit of his plays is the brilliant dialogue, and the secret of its success is the writer's choice of syntax and vocabulary belonging to school Arabic as well as the spoken language.

The Egyptian Government subsidises the so-called National Troupe and grants various sums to other private companies. The National Troupe's success is negative for, if anything, it has proved the unsuitability of classical Arabic for the stage.

(b) *Drama in the spoken language* : This makes the main body of the popular theatre in Egypt and its prosperity is concomitant with the national feeling and the prosperity of the middle class. During slumps, the theatre declines ; with the rising of national feeling it revives.

The dominant influence is Western, and comedy is the most developed form. Very few plays are direct translations from European languages ; fewer still are of genuine Egyptian authorship. Adaptations of Western plots with the necessary modifications are the rule. The characters are then naturalised and the dialogue created to suit the occasion. It is a happy form of plagiarism with occasional improvements on the original. The best known stage writers for the popular theatre are Badi' Khairi, and Youssef Wahbi, who is also the best known melodramatic actor. By far the greatest comedian is Naguib er-Rihani who, in any country and by any standard would be considered a first-class actor. Youssef Wahbi is a versatile man—actor, playwright, producer and stage manager. He has contributed most to stage technique in Egypt. Naguib er-Rihani devotes his genius to acting ; but he is also co-author, with Badi Khairi, of the plays he acts.

The stage has had a strong rival in the cinema, but, as everywhere else, that phase is passing. For the tourist season first-class foreign companies, subsidised by the government, are invited every year to give operas, operettas and plays ; their attraction is limited to the intelligentsia.

Architecture

The prevailing style is Mediterranean and the technique, Western, owing to the increased use of cement-concrete in which Egypt now is self-sufficient. Brick buildings are prevalent in the provinces ; but stone can easily be quarried near Cairo and is still used extensively there. The Arabic style has become a mere fancy of the rich ; but the tradition of Arabesque is preserved among the builders of mosques. The Pharaonic architecture has long been dead except in rural districts where the mud brick dwellings of the peasants have kept alive the ancient tradition. Coptic architecture, however, has a continuity with the past in a few churches and monasteries. American influence in architecture is beginning to show itself in Cairo and Alexandria ; but the Egyptian skyscrapers hardly ever rise to more than fifteen storeys.*

Furniture

Although most furniture is produced locally, the French style prevails among the rich and the middle class. Local industry used to depend on the imitation of foreign furniture but now depends almost entirely on catalogues from abroad. Modern furniture in tubular steel and glass is also produced locally. Egypt, in common with the world, is going through a chaotic state in taste and style, but the flare for the

* See Part I, p. 41.

Arabesque, the Pharaonic and steel furniture is now dying out. Among the artisans and lower middle classes Levantine furniture still prevails; but that is purely an economic necessity.†

Painting

Western in material, technique and form; from the classical smooth style to impressionism and surrealism; and from naturalism to the primitive—all schools exist in Egypt. Interest in Pharaonic art influences the moderns slightly. As would be expected in a country where the middle class is gaining in power and where political conditions are unstable, portrait painting and caricature are of high standard. Climatic conditions give brilliancy to subject matter and the romanticism of the tourist trade creates a market for gaudy water colours. The art of painting is so European that imitations of Persian style seem to come to Egypt with the over-elegance of the Parisian painters.

Sculpture

Mainly European in style; but was strongly influenced by the Pharaonic revival which has diminished with the death of the late Mukhtar.* Since his day the naturalistic school has been growing in power, but there is a tendency to idealise the peasant figure comparable to Hardy's idealization of English country folk.

Of the plastic arts: mural masks, busts, and coloured ash-tray statuettes are commercial productions of no artistic value.

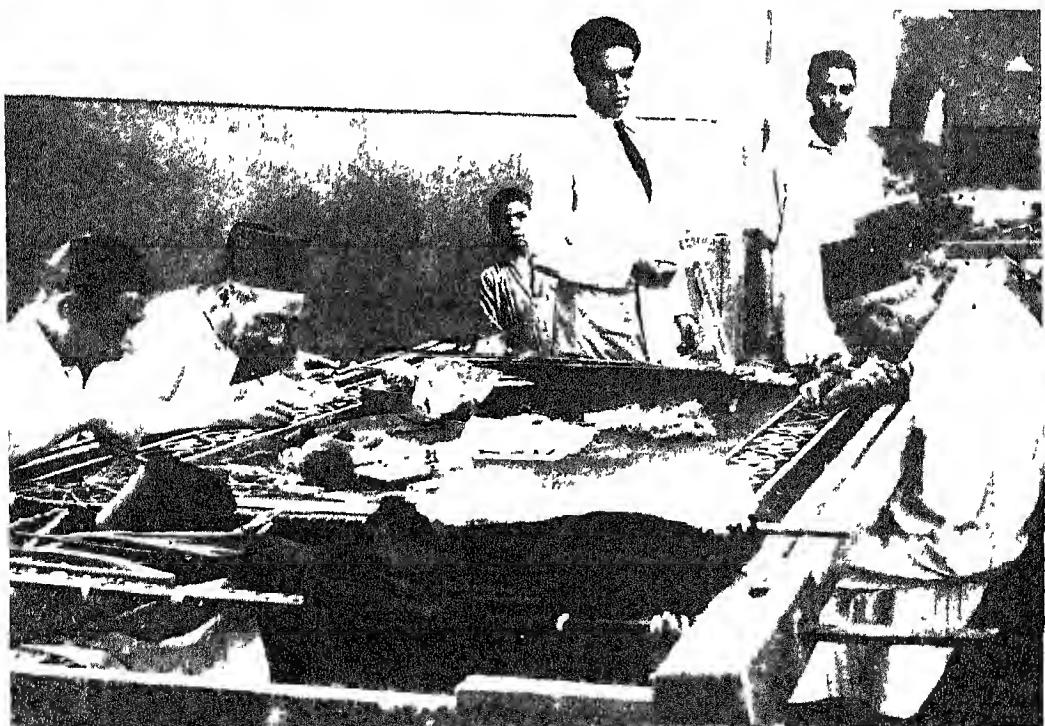
A healthy modern tendency is the use of sculpture in public museums. A considerable number of modern Egyptian sculptors are employed by the State to produce the life-like statues necessary for such

† See Part I, p. 44

* See Part I, pp. 28 and 42.



STUDENTS AT AN ART SCHOOL



TAPESTRY MAKING

A METAL WORKER

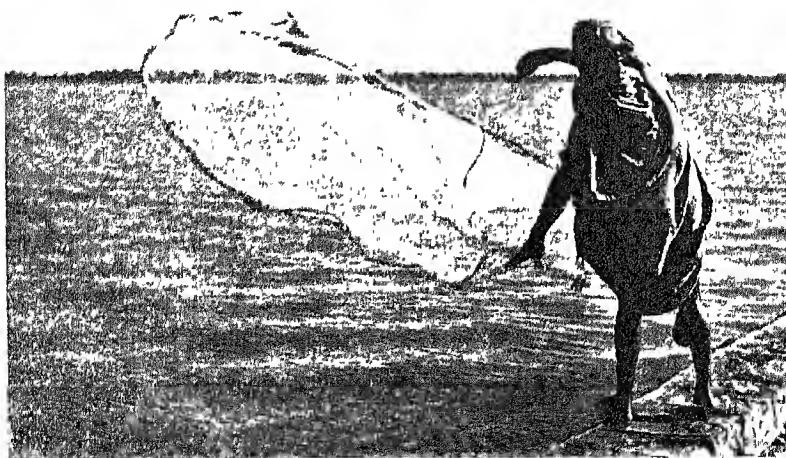


PLAYING THE MIZMAR

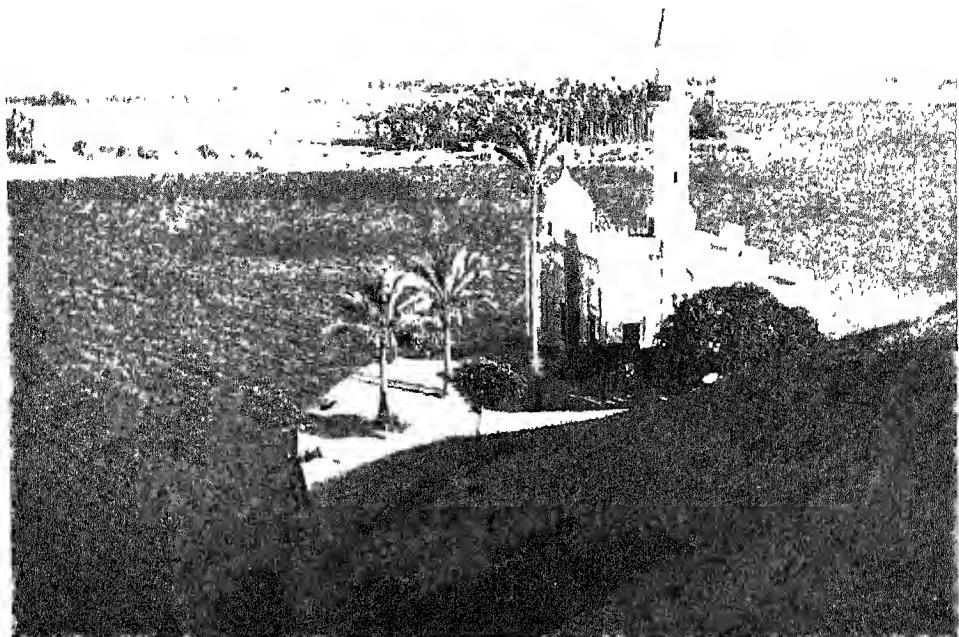




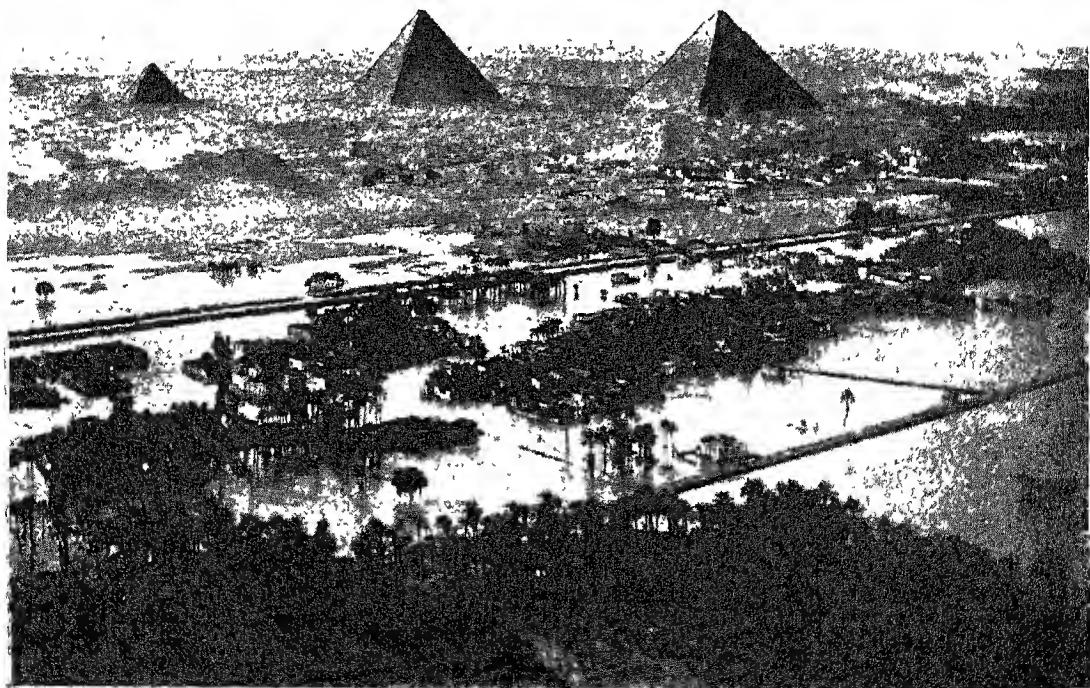
A PROVINCIAL FAMILY, WITH EUROPEAN GUEST



FISHING, LAKE MANZALA



THE MOUTH OF THE NILE AT ROSETTA



THE NILE IN FLOOD

museums as that of Ancient Civilisations, of Agriculture, of Hygiene and of Military History. Compared with the capitals of European countries, Cairo has very few public statues, particularly those of a symbolic nature.

Dancing

As a school activity, it is mainly Western ; as 'swing' exhibitionism it is an industrial product ; as a Franco-Arab cabaret it belongs to the tourist trade ; and as a native vulgarity it is a neurotic activity. Folk dancing, however, is a typically Egyptian art, which still keeps traces of the ritual of the ancient religion. It is probably slightly influenced by Saracenic dancing. Among the peasantry, dancing has ceased to serve any class purpose but it is an asexual activity with a hypnotic value. It is the peasants' counterpart of 'swing.'

Ballet dancing has recently been introduced in the girls' schools of the rich.

Calligraphy

This is naturally Arabic with Persian, Turkish and Iraqi styles. Of all the arts that have been mentioned, it has the longest unbroken continuity. It remains free of Western influences. A school was opened lately to train calligraphers to meet the demands of the market. The 'Tag' letters, which supply the function of capital letters, were invented in Egypt and are used by al-Wakai' al-Massria, the official Egyptian Gazette. Calligraphy is strongly a class product ; its variety of styles reflects the diversity of the ruling classes in Egyptian history.

The art of Calligraphy is intimately connected with the Koran. Koranic verses are moulded into beautiful patterns and inscribed on or woven into all kinds of materials, from paper to pottery, from silk to wood and from metals to stone. As a decorative art, the use of writing in Arabic has been more extensively developed than in any European writing.

The Press

Is a Western creation in Egypt and the first printing in Arabic is reputed to have been done on a Vatican machine brought by Napoleon. The Arabic press is going through the same development as the press of the capitalist world, and since the war ownership shows monopolistic tendencies. Owing to Egypt's dependency on Europe for news, major newspapers have first-class systems of foreign correspondence, the "Ahram" compares favourably with the "Times" in this respect ; but the party papers are not so well established as they are in a country like Britain ; the only strong party which has had an official organ since its foundation is the Wafd. The progress of the press owes a great deal to Lebanese journalists. The country is well supplied by dailies and weeklies, technical and literary periodicals; but there are no illustrated dailies. The Egyptian newspapers differ fundamentally from the English in being of literary, as well as news, value. The best writers, scientists and scholars of Egypt find it no stigma to contribute to them, and the ideal Egyptian journalist is the reformer and the man of letters.

The foreign press has had a boom during the war, but is now finding it difficult to carry on. The English, French, Italian, Armenian and Greek communities have all had their newspapers from the days of Capitulations, and these have been at most times malignant enemies of Egyptian nationalism. Like the radio, these newspapers have also helped in isolating the foreign communities from each other and from the people of the country.

Handicrafts

The main handicrafts of Egypt are spinning and weaving, tent making, copper and brass working, pottery, raffia matting, basketry, leather-work, rug making, ivory and woodwork. These are divided into

two classes: (a) handicrafts which depend on foreign customers and the class which is influenced by their culture, (b) handicrafts which depend on local demand by Egyptians of limited means. The first group is based on tools introduced from Europe. They are influenced by the modern development of Western handicraft, such as the tools an English reader may see in a handicraft-class at home. The second is based on the use of native tools and technique.

The first consists of bronze and brass work, ivory and woodwork, rug weaving, and leather work. The second of tent making, spinning and weaving, pottery, raffia and basketry. The differentiation is economic, since European customers require a certain standard of workmanship if not of taste. The second group, although of an inferior quality, is in better taste because of the functional nature of the products. It is revealing to compare the artificial taste of the rich tourists and natives alike and the waste of skill exemplified in the commodities they demand, with the genuine good taste and the economy displayed in the products which simple people need. Even the education of the rich does not seem to save them from comparing unfavourably, in a matter of taste, with a class which lacks education. But the brass ash tray, the wall rug beloved by tourists, the leather bag, embossed with pyramids and sphinx, and the ivory statuettes have a decorative luxury value, whereas the water-cooler, the basket, the raffia-mat and the homespun cotton length used for making the clothes of country people are no luxury articles: they are things in daily use and show a superiority of taste.

Games & Sport

The games and sport of city people of the schools and universities are mainly Western. They include football (Association), basketball, swimming, tennis, athletics, boxing and wrestling. In indoor amusements there is very little Western influence except in games of cards.

The most popular of all indoor games is "Tawla" (Tric-trac). Dominoes and chess come next.

In rural districts, the only foreign game which seems to have percolated down to the peasantry is football. This is probably due to the little expense entailed. A rolled sock filled with cotton stuffing makes a serviceable football, and with some imagination two stones make a goal. But there are quite a number of Egyptian games which go back to antiquity and which vary from district to district. Swimming is very popular among peasants, to the detriment of their health, since the canals in which they swim are a chief source of Bilharzia infection. A form of fencing with palm tree fronds is a pastime of many village lads. But peasant women content themselves with gentler games, such as the "Kabba" or a form of hop-scotch, and cat's cradle. Hide-and-seek, marbles, "officers and thieves," and hoop-bowling are among the games popular in country districts and cities alike. "Mankalla" is a game popular among the Nubians, although it is played all over Egypt. It is a form of draughts, with stones for men and holes in the ground for a board.

Social Habits

Tobacco, tea, coffee, alcoholic drinks, imported or locally produced, and narcotics are virtual monopolies in the hands of foreign traders and industrialists. Almost all tobacco at one time was imported from the Balkans ; but Virginian tobacco has proved to be a strong competitor lately. Consequently, the bubble-bubble is disappearing and the pipe is coming to the fore. Among elderly people snuff is still used, and among the poor the habit of rolling cigarettes by hand is prevalent.

Alcoholic drinks are mainly consumed in the cities ; the peasants hardly ever drink. Their chief stimulants are tea and coffee, which are taken all over Egypt. The peasants boil tea leaves in a certain manner to

make a strong stimulant which is bad for their health. This comparatively new habit was probably due to the success of the Narcotic Bureau in limiting the smuggling of hashish. Although the new habit is less injurious, the peasants devote a large portion of their very slender earnings to buying tea, because they find in the brew a temporary alleviation from fatigue.

Egypt has for some time been a paradise for the European connoisseur of wines and spirits. In addition to the short and long drinks familiar to Europeans, there are others made locally. The Greeks distil "Zibib," the Syrians "Araki." Since the war the Swiss breweries have taken full advantage of the restrictions on export to build up a stable local industry. Egypt is a good example of how the European officials in the East sometimes make laws to suit themselves. They saw to it, for instance, that duties on spirits were light!

Narcotics have been on the decrease particularly among the middle classes. Thanks to the Narcotic Bureau and the war, the international gangs of smugglers have had serious reverses. Narcotic habits seem to be prevalent among the petit-bourgeoisie, who are also prone to mysticism and religious rituals (such as the "Zikr"). The curse of frustration lies heavily on this class which hovers above the destitution of the peasantry and below the sufficiency of the middle class.

CONCLUSION

Considering that the country's education, social services, industry, system of commerce, culture and social vices are all mainly Western, it seems illogical to speak of modern Egypt as differing in any respect from Europe, America, or indeed any region where the capitalist system prevails. The writer hopes that such words as *capitalism*, *class*, *bourgeois*, *petit-bourgeois*, etc., will be understood in their purely technical sense. Unless explicitly stated, no condemnation is intended by the use of such words—not even a word like *imperialism*—for whatever the writer has meant, he has endeavoured to express in the most straightforward manner.

How is it, then, that Europeans feel, some of them genuinely and strongly, the difference between them and the people of Egypt? The most obvious difference is in the degree of industrialisation. Development in industry, just as it differentiates between the business man of New York and the farmer of the Middle West, accounts for the differences between the Egyptian *fallah* and the European trader. Economic conditions have compelled the poor to retain a certain type of dress and to dwell in certain quarters of the city, just as they compel the poor of England to live in slums. Agricultural conditions, too, have decided family relationships, a slower tempo of living, less sensitivity to speed, and a set of social habits different from those of Europeans. Tradition in countries like England and Egypt accounts for another difference.

Behind the moulding of national character there are factors of mal-nutrition or adequate diet, of repression or satisfaction of instincts, of health or disease, and of climatic conditions. Only the last is constant, the rest are variable and determined by the will of men. There is nothing immutable about national character, nothing except what our circumstances have made of us and what we have made of our circumstances.

Some of the differences between Egyptians and Europeans are fostered by capitalistic development. One of the characteristics of the European pattern of national character is individualism, one of the failures of individualism is the love of distinction for its own sake. People take endless trouble to look different from their neighbours. Utility furniture, which is probably one of the best styles England has ever produced, is rejected by many because the people next door have it. There is a parallel case to this in Egypt. Certain aspects of European culture repel the Egyptians, and certain cultural values of their past they preserve not because the first are harmful, or the second vital; but simply because they like to feel different from Europeans. All peoples seem to find in what differentiates them from others the value and the manifestation of their own integrity.



DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN EGYPT (1944).

Size of Holding (in acres)	Over 2,000	2,000-1,500	1,500-1,000	1,000-800	800-600
Number of Holders .	58	47	90	89	149
Size of Holding (in acres)	600-400	400-200	200-100	100-50	50-30
Number of Holders	398	1,441	3,024	6,656	9,227
Size of Holding (in acres)	30-20	20-10	10-5	5-1	Under 1
Number of Holders	11,887	41,307	83,511	599,985	1,792,530

According to the 1937 Census there are, in addition,
1,667,000 agricultural workers who own no land

MAIN ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE (IN £1,000) FROM 1913-1938

Year	Education	Public Health	% of Budget	Police & Interior	Justice	Army	% of Budget	Debt Payments	% of Budget	Compre- hensive Cost of Tax-collection		% of Budget	Expenditure Total
										Amount	Amount		
1913	533	345	6	1,212	873	1,098	20	4,950	30	420	3	15,728	
14	441	363	5	1,478	876	1,126	21	4,478	27	403	2	16,858	
15	365	392	5	1,242	821	1,034	20	4,591	30	405	3	15,325	
16	384	426	5	1,298	815	1,095	19	4,595	27	409	2	17,241	
17	440	415	5	2,160	848	1,328	24	4,597	24	390	2	19,202	
18	513	605	5	2,544	879	2,205	26	4,595	21	431	2	21,614	
19	629	622	5	3,250	1,075	2,152	25	4,595	18	478	2	25,415	
20	1,001	755	4	4,281	1,263	2,502	19	4,603	11	647	2	42,453	
21	1,049	740	6	4,699	1,254	2,374	28	4,601	16	631	2	29,042	
22	1,181	743	8	3,896	1,303	2,268	30	4,607	18	674	3	25,075	
23	1,355	762	7	3,886	1,515	2,178	25	4,606	15	798	3	30,301	
24	1,518	752	8	3,712	1,520	1,891	24	4,092	14	770	3	29,280	
25	2,108	831	9	3,944	1,561	1,885	22	4,285	13	783	2	34,205	
26	2,145	848	11	3,887	1,606	1,737	25	6,427	23	795	3	28,374	
27	2,480	970	11	4,059	1,676	1,819	25	4,726	15	827	3	30,654	
28	2,748	1,052	10	4,651	1,705	1,861	22	4,971	13	831	2	37,230	
29	3,065	1,271	11	4,859	1,759	1,881	21	4,744	12	843	2	41,128	
30	3,310	1,353	11	4,383	1,794	1,919	20	5,273	13	852	2	41,223	
31	3,166	1,343	12	4,189	1,791	1,756	21	4,348	12	823	2	36,992	
32	3,114	1,323	12	3,839	1,763	1,731	24	4,373	12	814	2	35,947	
33	3,185	1,329	13	3,750	1,739	1,752	21	4,195	12	794	2	34,906	
34	3,277	1,458	13	4,163	1,762	1,810	21	4,195	12	814	2	36,180	
35	3,734	1,588	14	3,783	1,765	1,961	19	4,189	11	855	2	39,039	
36	3,853	1,782	10	3,871	1,793	2,050	20	4,193	11	852	2	39,348	
37	4,139	2,075	15	3,991	1,789	2,863	21	4,193	10	874	2	42,010	
38	4,533	2,451	17	4,024	1,812	5,168	26	4,191	10	876	2	42,267	

* The figures 1913-1923 include the extra expenses incurred by the 1919 revolution.
The figures 1928-1929 include fine imposed by the British Government for the
murder of the Governor of the Sudan
† The figures 1913-1923 include £E146,250, the yearly cost of the British army
of occupation.

** The figures 1913-1923 do not include war allowances and the
amounts of £E1,250 for January 1920.
The figures for 1937-1938 include expenses of the State P. 1,145, Total money
and Telengana.
The figures 1917-1923 do not include war allowances and the
amounts of £E1,250 for January 1920.



LONGMANS

PRICE : FIVE SHILLINGS NET.

